

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

A MEMORANDUM OF THE PANEL
OF CONSULTANTS ON DISARMAMENT
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE
NOVEMBER, 1952

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

SECURITY INFORMATION
STATE review(s) completed.

COPY NO. 2

~~T-O-P~~ ~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

SECURITY INFORMATION

A MEMORANDUM OF THE PANEL OF CONSULTANTS
ON DISARMAMENT
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE

NOVEMBER, 1952

~~T-O-P~~ ~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

STATE review(s) completed.

~~T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T~~
~~SECURITY INFORMATION~~

~~A TIME OF PERIL~~

AMERICAN POLICY AND ARMS REGULATION

A Memorandum of the Panel of Consultants on Disarmament
of the Department of State

November, 1952

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

SECURITY INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

This Memorandum is an account of a series of discussions held by the undersigned as members of the Department of State's Panel of Consultants on Disarmament between May and October, 1952. It contains a set of considerations which seem to us to give the problem of arms regulation a genuine meaning for the direction of our National Security policy, and it indicates some modifications of policy and posture which we believe to be desirable.

This is a large undertaking, and it has necessarily led us well beyond the range of our special competence and concern. Some of the matters which we have considered on the way to our conclusions are the primary concern of professional soldiers and others, but this overlap is hardly avoidable in a study of the control of armaments. The subjects we have considered are only those to which we have been forced by our inquiry into the place of arms

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

2

regulation in national policy. The forces which lead us to consider problems of broad military and diplomatic policy are realities which we have not been able to avoid. That this is so, indeed, is in our view one of the most important conclusions we have reached.

It remains true, we think, that the very size of the problems we have considered argues for a deep and continued consideration of this problem, under the direct authority of the highest officers of the government. We think it evident that just as the responsibility for decision in these large matters must fall to those in authority, so the final thinking judgment must be theirs; consultants cannot do more than help to clear the ground for such top-level judgment.

Our memorandum attempts to present, then, not a set of conclusions, but rather a group of considerations which have seemed to us important, together with something of the course of discussion through which we have come. We have made no effort to hide the fact that we are often uncertain and sometimes divided. Nothing is gained by a pretense that all these matters are simple and clean-cut; indeed the beginning of understanding, we have found, lies

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

3

in an awareness of their tangled toughness.

We believe that the problem of arms regulation has a large and urgent relevance to the national safety, but we cannot show the meaning of this belief until we have given full value to the considerations which argue that such regulation is impossible or meaningless or both. So Part One of the Memorandum suggests first that there are many reasons to be fearful of any emphasis upon the objective of arms regulation, and second that this objective has nevertheless acquired an importance which makes it urgent to make sure that we miss no possible chance of moderating the arms race. Part Two deals with the shape of the present problem of international control of armaments and suggests that the subject may not be quite so intractable as the experience of recent years seems to suggest. Part Three deals with the character of possible approaches to the Soviet Union. Part Four is concerned with problems of the shape and direction which we believe American policy might take in response to the considerations set forth in the first three Parts. In broad outline these four parts correspond to the course of our own work and thought; the policy of caution and

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

4

hope which we try to outline in Part Four is not likely to have meaning except on the basis of some acceptance of the analysis in Parts One, Two, and Three.

We should like to underscore the meaning of our unanimity in signing this memorandum. We came to the work of this Panel from five different backgrounds of interest and activity, and at first we had as many approaches to the topic. What has emerged and is here recorded is a general view which no one of us held before. There is no member of the Panel who has not learned from its work, and such conclusions as we have reached are truly the result of intensive common effort. It is true that for technical information we have depended mainly on the reporting of our two scientific members, but we have had a chance to hear other technical witnesses, and we feel on reasonably solid ground as to the ascertainable facts. Our assessment of the meaning of these facts, whatever it may be worth, is common and unanimous; it is also new, in the sense that for us at least it has grown from the work and thought of this Panel.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T
SECURITY INFORMATION

PART ONE

THE IMPORTANCE OF ARMS REGULATION

Our first object is to indicate our feeling that the objective of arms regulation is important. This feeling is strong--but it is quite different from that of some who believe that the virtue of disarmament is self-evident. We think that there are many good reasons for doubting the desirability of arms regulation, for we do not take lightly the realities of the present international scene--in particular we strongly believe that the collective defense of the United States and the non-Soviet world requires at present a heavy measure of rearmament. So before urging the importance of arms regulation, we wish to note some of the obstacles to any such undertaking.

Section I. Some Reasons for Doubting the Present Relevance of Arms Regulation.

The word disarmament has a bad reputation among

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

5

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

6

professionals in the field of international politics. This reputation was earned by the unhappy result of the prolonged efforts for disarmament which took place in the years between 1919 and 1936; it is useful to review the record briefly and note the present meaning of the lessons it taught.

Two great efforts at disarmament occurred in these years. One was the effort at naval limitation, centered on the U.S., Great Britain, and Japan; it resulted in the treaties signed at Washington in 1922 and at London in 1930. The other effort was the prolonged discussion of general disarmament, centered in Europe, and mainly concerned with ground and air forces, which never reached any result at all. Both efforts obviously failed to prevent war, and it can be argued that the naval treaties, in the long run at least, did real damage to the cause of peace. Their supposed success may have made the Western nations slow in resisting the Japanese expansion which eventually went so far that war in the Pacific became unavoidable.

These two episodes seem to teach that efforts to achieve any limitation of armaments can do no good unless

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

7

they are closely integrated with the real political problems of international affairs. What meaning there was in the Naval Treaties of Washington and London was directly related to a political status quo in which the peace of the Western Pacific was confided to the care of the Japanese Empire. So long as this trust was not abused, there was no harm in the Naval Treaties. When this part of the arrangement broke down, under the pressure of Japanese expansion, the whole settlement became a dangerous deception; arms limitation was neither possible nor desirable where the political premises on which it rested lacked validity.

In Europe, the same basic point was demonstrated in a different way; the fact that the negotiations on disarmament never escaped from the futility of constantly expanding paper plans was a direct result of the fact that they were never effectively integrated with the realities of European politics. The result was that history went down one path while the disarmament negotiations went down another, until at last when the disarmament conference was ready to have its first full-fledged meeting in 1933, Adolf Hitler was already in power, and it had become urgent for men of good will to turn their thoughts from

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

8

the control
of armaments to the control of aggression by armed strength.

Some students argue not simply that arms regulation must be sought only within a workable framework of political settlement, but that it is hardly worth seeking in any case, since it is possible only when it is unnecessary. On this reckoning, an arms race is not the sole cause of international tension, as the idealists of the 1920's often thought; it is not even a contributing factor, as more moderate critics suggest; it is nothing more than a thermometer which registers the heat generated in other ways. If this heat increases to the point of explosion, there will be a war; if, on the other hand, the international temperature should go down, the thermometer of armaments will follow, and the arms race will be moderated without any need for a disarmament conference. The important thing, on this view, is to turn the efforts of statesmen and nations toward the settlement of those issues which are most likely to produce international heat; disarmament should be left to take care of itself.

Whether or not this more extreme view is accurate, this much at least seems clear from the experience of the

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

9

20's and 30's; no good can come of efforts to consider the problem of limitation of armaments in a vacuum. For 1962, this means simply that it is essential to consider this problem in the light of the great contest between the free world and the U.S.S.R. This contest now demands of the United States and her allies and friends a great effort to strengthen their collective defenses. Any genuine regulation of armaments must somehow be connected with such a change in this general situation that the regulation has a chance of survival.

The honest student of relations between the United States and the Soviet Union must recognize their differences to be so deep-seated that no genuine, large-scale political settlement seems likely within the present generation. The gulf which separates the Soviet world from the world of the United States and her allies is wider and deeper than those which we have been led in recent centuries to expect to find between great Powers or groups of Powers. The inner necessities of the two kinds of societies appear to many students to require that they should be in contest one with another; even if present tensions should decrease, there would remain divergences too deep for trust or friendship. Nor is it possible for us to suppose that the two great groups

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

10

of Powers can live apart from each other; all around the world (~~their borders touch each other, and~~) their interests conflict. If anything has been made plain since 1945, it is that the world in which the United States finds itself is one in which there also exists a great and hostile power system. Policies that cannot survive in such a world must be discarded. This conclusion already seems to set sharp limits to the meaning of efforts to achieve an international control of armaments, but there is worse to come.

The imminence and magnitude of Soviet hostility is a relatively new phenomenon, to which the United States and its allies are still making their initial responses. One of these is a great new effort at rearmament, and while there may be argument as to the proper scope of this effort, there can be no disagreement as to its necessity. Until it has made itself stronger, the non-Soviet world will be in constant danger of additional acts of expansionism on the part of the Soviet Union. For some time to come the United States, as the greatest Power of the non-Soviet world, will be deeply and necessarily committed to a program of rearmament.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

11

In this context we may well ask whether all discussion of the control of armaments is not at present irrelevant. It appears to be a lesson of the twenties that arms regulation can only have value as part of some political settlement: it seems to be a lesson of the forties that no major satisfactory settlement is now possible with the Kremlin; it is a necessary part of our present policy to rearm. Taken together these propositions make it seem very plain that this is not the time for us to limit our arms effort. And this is, we think, the basic present view of the government and people of the United States.

It is true that American representatives in the United Nations have constantly asserted their desire for progress toward disarmament: only a year ago the President and the Secretary of State began a major new effort to demonstrate this purpose. But this effort is limited by a specific statement that the United States sees no chance for arms limitation until such matters as Korea can be settled. More generally, the present disarmament proposals of the United States Government are so constructed that

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

12

Soviet acceptance would involve very great changes in the whole Soviet system. The United States Government plainly does not expect early Soviet acceptance. The present proposals are designed for some indefinite future time. They are related to present policy only indirectly, first, as a part of the propaganda contest with the Soviet Union and second, as proposals carefully designed to make sure that if by chance one of them is accepted by the Kremlin, the West will not lose in relative strength.

The question of the proper place and shape of such an effort as the one that the United States is now making in the United Nations is both important and delicate, and in a later section we attempt to state our own sense of the subject. But here we wish merely to observe that the character and shape of the effort, to date, does not contradict but rather reinforces our judgment that the United States Government does not consider that this is the time to expect arms regulation in any immediate sense.

If this were the whole story, it would be comforting, for the pattern we have developed has about it a certain clarity and coherence which make it relatively

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

13

easy to proceed to decision and action. But we have to state our belief that thus far the analysis is incomplete. Without withdrawing a word of what we have been saying, we nevertheless believe that there is urgent present relevance to the idea of arms regulation, and that our national policy should be adjusted accordingly. In the light of the argument thus far, this can be true only if the present arms race is quite unprecedented in character. We believe that it is.

But before we examine the character of the present arms race, let us emphasize the limited meaning of the considerations we are about to present. In combination, the special characteristics of the current arms race persuade us that the idea of arms regulation cannot be dismissed as irrelevant. We believe that the rapidly growing atomic stockpiles are in themselves a quite sufficient cause for refusing to accept as the last word that skepticism about the notion of disarmament which is the natural product of recent history. When, in addition, full weight

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

14

is given to the extraordinary posture into which a heavy dependence upon atomic weapons is forcing the United States, and to the fact that atomic weapons bring the United States and the USSR within military range of each other in a fashion which would otherwise be quite beyond the power of either, we think it becomes plain that weapons of mass destruction are having political effects of such magnitude that they have become in themselves political facts of the first order. We think it follows that ~~there~~ is political meaning to the notion of limiting or controlling these weapons.

But we think it important to observe that this conclusion is quite limited in its meaning; it does not necessarily imply that disarmament or even some modification of the arms race is in the American interest. The fact that this race carries its dangers does not mean that there is some other less dangerous course. Nothing in what we are about to discuss makes the power and hostility of the Soviet Union less important; nor does the magnitude of the problem of weapons of mass destruction necessarily

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

15

mean that this problem can be separated from other great political questions which have arisen in the contest between the United States and the USSR. If, on balance, the considerations which we are about to examine permit the assumption that questions of the limitations of armaments are of sufficient importance to deserve the most careful consideration, they do not allow any conclusion that such limitation is absolutely desirable, or even possible.

What we shall have at the end of Part I is the more limited and difficult conclusion that American policy must act in constant reference to three propositions which are very hard to reconcile with one another. First, no regulation of armaments has proved feasible except as part of some genuine political settlement; we shall find that atomic stockpiles are themselves a political fact, but we shall have to note also that they are a part of our whole strategy of defense; it therefore seems doubtful that they can be regulated without other major adjustments. Second, most sorts of understanding with the Kremlin are either impossible or

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

16

undesirable or both, and even if peaceful coexistence is possible, it cannot be comfortable or cordial. Third, unless atomic armaments are in some way regulated, our whole society will come increasingly into peril of the gravest kind. It is not easy to live with these three propositions together, but we do not see how it can be avoided, and we are persuaded from the whole record of recent history that dangerous realities cannot be overcome by pretending they are not there.

Our own feeling is that just as the toughness of these three propositions arises from the fact that they must be taken together, so the beginnings of a resolution, if there is one, will be found only when policy is constantly based on all three propositions. We believe that in recent years it has become increasingly difficult to keep our attention fixed on the third proposition--the one which asserts that the whole of our society is in grave and growing danger. Yet the reality of this third proposition destroys the validity of the flawless logic which can be built on the first two propositions taken alone. And in particular it makes nonsense of the conclusion that arms regulation is not relevant to present policy.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

Section II. Character of the Atomic Arms Race.

In assessing the character of the present contest we have learned most by considering the nature of atomic weapons. We find three properties in this contest which set it off from any which has preceded it. First, the two great power blocs are rapidly acquiring the capacity to do quite fantastic damage to each other. Second, the development of this capacity is accompanied in the United States by an increasingly rigid commitment to the doctrine of the swift and unlimited counter-offensive. Third, there is a sharp disparity between the rather limited connections by which the United States and the USSR touch each other economically and politically, and the very direct and overwhelming fashion in which they are becoming able to reach each other in a military way. Each of these three propositions seriously affects the notion that the regulation of arms is not important for the United States, and taken together they force us to the conclusion

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

13

that any scheme of thought which dismisses the problem of regulation as irrelevant is itself dangerously incomplete. But to make this assertion persuasive, in the face of the considerations we have been discussing, it is necessary to describe in some detail the meaning of each of the three propositions.

A. The Rate of Production.

Although it is no secret that both the United States and the USSR are engaged in the production of atomic bombs, and although it is impossible for any serious student to be ignorant of the fact that atomic bombs are instruments of a wholly new order of destructive power, the special character of the race in atomic weapons is not, perhaps, as widely understood as it might be. The very sense that this weapon is something new and terrible, combined with an awareness of the degree to which national safety may be involved in maintaining secrecy, has reduced the quantity and quality of responsible discussion to a surprisingly low level. This has been true almost as much within the government as outside it, since responsible officials are among the first to avoid any hint of trespassing upon ground

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

19

so sensitive as the field of atomic energy has generally been held to be. Yet without an appreciation of the special and extraordinary characteristics of the contest in atomic weapons, it is impossible to reach any conclusions as to the importance of the problem of the regulation of armaments. It therefore seems a necessary part of this report that there should be included here a sober statement of the basic realities of the atomic arms race. Unfortunately there is little direct information about the Russian side of this race, and no close estimate of Russian strength can be reliable. But while it would be useful to know just how much fissionable material the Russians now possess, there is much to be learned from considering the general nature of atomic development. And here we can readily learn from the American experience.

It is now just a little over seven years since the first atomic explosion occurred, in July, 1945. In that first year only a handful of bombs was available, and for four years thereafter the United States made no great effort to increase its productive facilities for fissionable material; important efforts to expand our facilities began only in 1949, after the first explosion in the Soviet Union. Yet the amount of fissionable material on hand has increased at a constantly accelerating

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

19 a

rate, until now we have enough material for _____
atomic bombs having an average power much greater than
that of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima. Since 1949
four successive programs of expansion have been launched;
production will continue to increase rapidly through the
(continued on Page 20)

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

20

next decade. For the years from 1945 to 1958, the pattern of this increase is that the destructive power of the stockpile tends to double every year and a half; in a five-year span it is multiplied by ten. Thus the atomic bomb is not only the most powerful weapon in history; it seems to have the characteristic that the amount of power on hand multiplies at a quite extraordinary rate of speed.

Nor is this pattern of regularly multiplied stockpiles peculiar to the United States; there is no reason why it should not be expected to appear also in the case of the Soviet Union, since its principal causes are inherent in the nature of atomic technology. Fissionable material does not wear out, and the process of producing it almost inevitably leads to technical improvements which the rate of increase production. There is no permanently important shortage of raw materials for any great Power. Compared to other military items, moreover, atomic bombs are cheap. The Soviet Union started later than the United States, and her effort is probably smaller in scale, so that she may never have as many bombs as the United States at any given time, but she can easily have as many at any time as the United States had a few years previously. This means

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

23

that the time when the Russians will have the material to make 1000 atomic bombs may well be only a few years away and the time when they have 10,000 only a few years further on. Any sensible forecast must assume that in 10 years' time Soviet atomic weapons may be numbered in five figures. The Russians may not have so large a stockpile so soon--but it is also possible that they may have it sooner.

There is much debate in the United States Government currently as to what number of atomic bombs delivered on the target is enough to cause the destruction of a large modern industrial society beyond the hope of recovery. In such discussions much depends on what is meant by destruction; a society may still have ~~great~~ military strength, for example, at a time when it is already dead for most purposes. Some students say that for the United States a few hundred bombs on target would be enough; others think that by careful planning and preparation we could survive up to 2500. In the case of this latter estimate, the term "survival" must have a rather specialized meaning; 2500 atomic bombs of the presently known Soviet design would have a total force on the order of 100 million tons

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

22

of high explosive, or 400 times the total load dropped on Germany by allied bombers in World War II. There is also much argument about the number of attacking aircraft which could get through to put their bombs on the target, and it is widely believed that on this point we can greatly increase our capability. But only the most optimistic hope to push the rate of successful delivery as low as 20%.

The meaning of these figures is plain. Even a combination of our most optimistic present assessments leads to the theoretical conclusion that the Soviet Union may be able to destroy our economy beyond the hope of recovery when she has 15,000 atomic bombs, while she might well have this ability when she has as few as 600. The lower figure might be reached in a few years, and the upper is not out of reach within the next decade and a half. In twenty-five years, if the arms race continues, the destructive capacity of the USSR may be at a level such as to make all efforts at defense seem unavailing.*

* Considerations of this character have led some to conclude that since all defense against atomic attack is likely to be too little in the long run, there is no particular point in trying to improve our present very inadequate arrangements. We are unable to agree with this

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

23

When any great power has achieved a five figure stockpile of atomic weapons, it will probably have placed itself in such a position that its basic destructive power cannot be destroyed by any single surprise attack by any enemy. The mechanics of a mass surprise assault are singularly complex, and large stockpiles can be widely dispersed--especially as smaller aircraft become capable of delivering atomic bombs. If the atomic arms race continues, therefore, we seem likely to have within a relatively few years a situation in which the two great powers will each have a theoretically clear-cut capacity to destroy the other, while each will be unable to exert that capacity except at the gravest risk of being destroyed in turn.

And this capacity is likely to be largely unaffected by the fact that our side may always have many more weapons than the other. There is likely to be a time in the near future when the Soviet Union will have "enough" bombs--no matter how many more we ourselves may have.

view; Our own belief is that our air defenses should have the highest priority, and that a strong air defense is an essential part of any effort to escape from the prospect sketched in this section. This assessment, which grows directly out of our view of arms regulation, is developed in Part IV, C, below.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

24

Were it not for the fact that it is so near and so plainly important, the topic of the probable behavior of men and nations in such a situation might well be avoided on the ground that it defies an answer. Whatever else may be said of it, it is plainly unprecedented. The power which will exist is not the power to win an ordinary military victory. It is rather the power to end a civilization and a very large number of the people in it.

We wish to emphasize that the statements we have been making are weighted on the side of caution. We have not included in our account the still problematical factor of thermonuclear weapons, although we think it highly probable that such weapons will eventually be available to both sides unless there is some modification of the present race in development. ^{have} Neither/we included the awesome possibility that the contending powers might set off enough bombs to contaminate the atmosphere and destroy vast numbers of people outside the target areas. Finally, we have not included the additional destructive effect which may be attainable by combining atomic weapons with those of biological and chemical warfare. All of these considerations are real and important, but we have wished to concentrate attention upon the central and critical

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

24 a

fact, which is that atomic stockpiles tend to grow at a constantly increasing rate, and that this growth tends to give each side the capacity to strike devastating blows at its opponents.

Yet, while we think the picture we have sketched is probable, we would disclaim any pretense that the future is ever certain. It is possible that future developments on the defense may indefinitely defer the day when both sides can destroy each other. But it is also at least possible that no such good fortune awaits us. And the prospect we are discussing--even if it is not certain--is so full of meaning that we cannot disregard it just because it may possibly not come true.

(go on to Page 25)

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

Some students, believing that a recognition of each other's capacities must have a sobering effect, argue that a period when bombs are numbered in tens of thousands on each side may be one of relative security. The reality of danger, they claim, will serve to prevent the leaders on both sides from throwing the switch. Others take the opposite view, holding that a world so dangerous will not be very calm, and suggesting that it is always possible for someone high in authority to make the mistake of thinking that if he is sufficiently bold and clever, he can in fact win a one-way victory. Certainly there is precedent for this sort of thinking. Those who hold this latter view point out further that in this case the deterrent fears will have to be effective every time; one failure will be enough.

Between these two contrasting views it is not easy to choose with certainty; it is doubtful if anyone can really be sure which is correct, since the assessment is necessarily conjectural. Yet this very uncertainty may be important. It may be that when they have plenty of bombs these two great Powers will not destroy each other,

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

26

but it is also possible that they will. To us it seems clear that even if for a while no one throws the switch, a world of this kind will be shadowed by anxiety and even anguish in a way that makes our present troubled existence seem sunny by comparison. A world of such uncertainty and peril is one which American policy should aim to prevent. Yet unless in some fashion there is achieved a regulation of the atomic arms race, this kind of world is coming.

One method of limiting the atomic arms race, of course, is to eliminate one of the parties engaged in the race. Terrible as this suggestion may be, and fraught as it almost surely is with consequences well beyond those implied in the initial decision, it cannot be discounted as irrelevant. At the very least, it should be observed that as the time approaches when the Soviet Union will have a generally recognized capacity to destroy the society of the United States, the thought that action should be taken before it is too late will occur with a wholly new order of force and urgency in many important parts of this country. ~~Given the ignorance which exists even at the very highest levels as to the reality of the Soviet atomic~~

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

273

~~efforts,~~ These thoughts may or may not occur at a time when they are accurately connected to the objective realities of the arms race, but this fact does not reduce their possible significance. The potential import of thoughts of this character is one illustration among many of the way in which the rapidity and power of expanding production of atomic weapons may have political effects so great that it becomes impossible to suppose that this arms race is merely a thermometer of the temperature of international conflict.

~~Section B.~~ The Character of American Policy Toward the Production and Use of Atomic Weapons.

In the decade since it embarked upon its first efforts to produce an atomic weapon, the United States Government has faced a series of decisions as to the way in which it would deal with the military uses of atomic energy. The cumulative effect of these decisions has been to create a situation in which it is increasingly possible that there may be an unlimited use of weapons of almost unlimited destructive power.

The first great decision, of course, was the decision to try to develop a weapon. Taken in war time,

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

28

and in the shadow of the possibility that the Nazis might be well ahead in their development of such weapons, this decision seems beyond criticism. From this decision there came atomic weapons. A similar decision, from a similar concern, was reached in 1950 when the Government began its intensive effort to develop thermonuclear weapons. Then it was the tension of a "cold war" and the gnawing fear that the Russians might be ahead of us which were decisive. And from this decision we are getting hydrogen bombs.

Having developed something which looked as if it would have military value, the United States was faced in 1945 with the question whether it would use its new weapon. Historically, decisions of this character with regard to military weapons fall into three classes. First, it is possible to decide not to use the weapon in any circumstances; such decisions are relatively rare. Second, it is possible to decide to use the weapon only if the enemy uses this weapon or something similar first; this kind of decision has been relatively frequent in recent generations, in connection with weapons which for one reason or another were considered to be inhumane. Finally, it is possible to decide simply that the weapon is useful in the service of victory, and should therefore be used; on balance this is the usual decision which is made with regard to new weapons. In the case of the atomic bomb, the American decision was the third. Taking the position that the fundamental wickedness is war and not weapons,

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T29
37

the American government determined in 1945 that it would use the new weapon to complete its victory over Japan, and it has been a constant part of American policy since that time that in the event of an act of aggression, the American government would feel free to use atomic weapons.

The third element in the American position on atomic weapons has been the determination of the United States to retain in its own hands the authority to determine whether, where, and how it proposes to use its atomic bomb. Although it is probable that there would not be any use of atomic weapons by the United States until some consideration had been given to the feelings of other nations, there is no formal provision for any such consideration. In one sense, of course, this retention of unilateral authority is merely a continuation of the traditional independence and sovereignty of the United States Government, characteristics which are shared by many governments. But in another sense the atomic bomb is a special case. Both in Korea and in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the military effort of the United States is combined with that of other nations and operated under the authority of agencies that include many other

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

30

countries among their active members. Especially in the case of the defense of Europe, it is evident that the considerations which govern allied decisions are not those of any one nation but those which are worked out together in the councils of a great coalition. The one military element of the defense of Europe for which this is in no sense true is the atomic bomb. All decisions with regard to the use of this weapon are decisions to be made by Americans only, acting under the orders of their own government, without the participation or even the knowledge of their colleagues and allies in the uniforms of other nations. Since 1945 the United States has embarked on a policy of international collective security, both through the United Nations and through regional alliances. In spite of this policy, the whole question of the use of atomic weapons has been retained as a uniquely American responsibility.

A fourth American decision, reached only gradually, and at least partly in response to Russian development, has been the decision to proceed toward the production of as large a stockpile as is practicable, as rapidly as possible. At first it was supposed that a few atomic

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

31

weapons would be decisive in any future war, and that any large stockpile would be unnecessary. But closer study indicated the unreality of this view, and in recent years it has increasingly been felt that there is almost no limit to the number of bombs which would be desirable. Production is now being widely expanded, and responsible organs of the government, in Congress as well as in the Executive Branch, are increasingly committed to the belief that each increase in the American stockpile will indefinitely represent a valuable addition to American strength for peace. In these circumstances, it is not easy to see how there can be any early moderation of present efforts to make as many bombs as possible as quickly as possible.

Fifth, having developed atomic weapons, having asserted its freedom to use them, having maintained its right to decide unilaterally when, where, and how it will use them, and having done its best to have as many and as powerful bombs as it reasonably can, the United States is in fact planning to use atomic bombs in the event of war, and this plan is not dependent upon any prior use of such weapons by any possible aggressor. The two major hypothetical contests are an inter-continental war with the Soviet Union, and a war for the defense of Western

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-C-P S-E-C-R-E-T

32

Europe; at present, both these contests may be expected to occur together, if they occur at all. In both contests, it seems certain that atomic weapons will be used. Indeed, such is the present position of American weapons and military capabilities that it is exceedingly difficult to conceive of any conflict involving a direct contest with the Soviet Union in which atomic weapons would not be used.

Finally, it is generally believed that the United States would react to any major hostile attack by an immediate and overpowering retaliation, whose objective would be to drop as many atomic bombs as quickly as possible on strategic targets within the homeland of the enemy country. It seems likely that once the switch is thrown, the American Strategic Air Command will automatically act to destroy the war-making power of the Soviet Union. Practical considerations seem to indicate that if such an attack is to have its best chance of effectiveness, it must be conducted with great rapidity, and with a maximum concentration of force. In such planning, there can be no abatement of the attack for political or other considerations, and there can hardly be any selection of targets on other than a strictly military basis; the presence or absence of people becomes irrelevant, except

T-C-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

33

as they are producers and therefore military targets. ?
The object of the attack is to "saturate" the defense,
and the whole concept seems closely connected with a sense
that defense against this kind of warfare--for us as for
the enemy--is now not really possible.

This, then, is the pattern of the development of
American policy toward atomic weapons in the last decade.
From the initial decision to develop such a weapon the
United States has proceeded, step by step, to a position
in which it seems likely that our first great military
action, in the event of aggressive war by the Soviet
Union, will be a massive atomic assault designed to end
the Soviet will to resist, and carrying with it many
millions of casualties and conceivably the destruction
of Russian society as it now exists. This decision to
conduct this operation would at present be uniquely American,
and it now has the first claim upon the supply of atomic
weapons.

Two additional characteristics of present American
policy increase the significance of the current commitment
to immediate and massive retaliatory action. First is
the fact that in spite of the very considerable effort
of rearmament which has been undertaken, this massive

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

34

attack upon the industries and the population of the Soviet Union appears to be the major offensive capacity of the United States. This is not simply one way of dealing with the Soviet Union in the event of war; it appears to be the only way now seriously considered as a pathway to victory or even to an acceptable end of hostilities. Second, this intensive preoccupation with the development of a massive capacity for atomic attack is not matched by any corresponding concern for the defense of the U.S. in case of a similar attack on the part of the Soviet Union. Indeed both the public and the responsible military authorities appear to be persuaded that the important characteristic of the atomic bomb is that it can be used against the Soviet Union; much less attention has been given to the equally important fact that atomic bombs can be used by the Soviet Union against the United States. This situation results partly from the pattern of our atomic decisions, partly from the natural impact of the sound military doctrine of the offensive, and partly from an apparent reluctance to face the simple but unpleasant fact that the atomic bomb works both ways.

In addition to its preparation for massive and

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

35

immediate strategic counterattack, the United States Government has given attention to other uses of atomic weapons in support of local campaigns, and these other uses are of great importance. Conspicuously, the defense of Europe is more and more predicated upon the employment of atomic weapons for a number of purposes such as counter-air attack and the destruction of communications centers. Even on the battlefield it may be that the bomb will become half of a new kind of nutcracker in which ground troops force the enemy to concentrate while the bomb forces him to disperse. Thus even the areas which have hitherto been reserved for so-called "conventional" weapons will increasingly have an atomic component. From the point of view of the effectiveness of the defense in very difficult circumstances, this development is altogether understandable, but there is no escape from the fact that it still further increases our general dependence upon atomic weapons in any major contest. As this dependence increases, it may become more and more difficult for the United States to look toward regulation of a weapon which is its central reliance.

At present, the decisions which have led to this

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

36

situation are so deeply imbedded in the Government, and in the consciousness of responsible officers, that they are hardly open to question. Yet it takes no very vivid imagination to see that as the Russians, in turn, develop their own stock of atomic weapons, the United States will be forced to face the unpleasant fact that it can use its atomic weapons only at the gravest possible danger of incurring the destruction of American society. So if atomic weapons remain our principal reliance, we may be forced to a desperate decision between equally terrible alternatives of defeat and atomic war.

There are many causes for the fact that American atomic policy has developed as it has, and no one need suppose that there has been at any stage of its development any easy alternative course to that which has actually been followed. But the fact that American policy has developed as it has makes it hard for us to think that the notion of regulation of armaments should be discarded as irrelevant to our contemporary scene. The character of atomic weapons persuades us that the world is not going to have many more major wars--and we are also persuaded that it is extremely important to keep their number low.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

37

C. The Military Reach Exceeds the Political Grasp.

The race in atomic weapons has the characteristic that the two great powers are both rapidly developing a capacity to do each other military damage in a manner and to a degree which very far exceed anything which they can do to each other, or even any connection which they may have with each other, in any other way. It is true, as already noted, that the political and economic interests of the United States and the USSR are in conflict with one another at many points throughout the world; the normal characteristic of these conflicts, however, is that the nearer you come to the boundary line, the more nearly marginal they become. Even in Germany, where the stakes are greatest, and the lines most sharply drawn, what is at stake is something much less than the survival of the two societies. Without the atomic bomb, the pattern of contest between the United States and the Soviet Union might be one in which one power or the other might be expected to make limited gains, up to the point at which a combination of distance and energetic interest reversed the balance of effort. Neither side would have the capacity to destroy the other, and sooner or later

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

38

it might be hoped that the lines of division would stabilize in a general way and the two powers begin to learn the arts of coexistence. The capacity to produce and deliver large numbers of weapons of mass destruction radically alters the picture. This simple fact gives to the atomic bomb a political significance all its own; and since the production of atomic weapons has this direct and active political meaning, a direct and active political meaning must be attached to any proposal for the limitation of such weapons.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

PART TWO

WHAT SORT OF REGULATION?

As soon as we reach the conclusion that arms regulation is important, it becomes necessary to look more closely at the shape of this goal. However desirable it may be to regulate armaments, it does not follow that there is any acceptable way of doing it. We must therefore reexamine the questions about effective regulation which seem to have resisted solution so effectively in the years since the war. What sort of scheme is necessary? And how can you get it? In undertaking this inquiry, we have been constantly aware of its difficulty. We have found that in this forest it is hard to penetrate and yet easy to get lost. We did not find it an easy or welcome task to consider the concrete problems of a negotiated regulation of armaments even as far as we have. We have been forced into the subject.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

2

Our reluctance to undertake this inquiry was accentuated by the knowledge that some of those who helped us in our work hoped that our inquiry might result in the development of a comprehensive blueprint for the balanced reduction of armaments of all descriptions. There is therefore a certain danger that our own quite different undertaking might be mistaken for a clumsy and incomplete effort to draft such a comprehensive scheme. This misinterpretation we are eager to avoid--the more so because it is our reluctant opinion that the drafting of neat and comprehensive technical schemes for disarmament is increasingly becoming a waste of time if indeed it is not dangerously misleading. Our explanation of this conclusion may be useful in clarifying our own approach to the problem--and is in any case owing to those who do not share our view.

A. Comprehensive Blueprints of Disarmament are Undesirable.

Our basic objection to comprehensive schemes for arms regulation is that they are inevitably irrelevant

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

3

to present international politics--except as they may have a certain modest effect on opinion in some places. They must be irrelevant, because they have to be satisfactory in all respects to American eyes as blueprints, and such beautiful blueprints are contrary to the nature of contemporary political reality. Moreover any undertaking which has only one real aspect will tend almost inevitably to be governed by that aspect, and in the case of large plans for arms limitation this means that the values of propaganda soon become dominant. We have the feeling, for example, that part of the pressure for a general blueprint of disarmament comes from a natural wish to have something which can be exhibited as a proof of good intentions.

In and of itself, such an undertaking might seem minor but useful; it is fair to ask why the United States should not capitalize on such a concrete demonstration of its genuine desire to live in a safe and open world. But unfortunately, when the planning has been done with

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

4

an eye to propaganda, it requires public statements and proposals, and since it is a basic article of policy that now is not the time for genuine negotiation, all public proposals must be designed not in the hope of acceptance, but in the fear that they may offer some concealed advantage to the enemy. Thus every plan is and must be scrutinized to make sure that it moves toward a safe and open world by stages every one of which is in itself advantageous to the United States.*

* The "safeguards" and "stages" by which this advantageous but imaginary pattern is developed are usually sharpened and made still more imaginary by the criticism of military men whose concurrence is required, and there is a natural tendency at first to suppose that this is due to the "military mind." We cannot agree; we think it due to basic decisions of policy. In the context of a general belief that disarmament is not a present goal, and an underlying conviction that the one great reality is the contest with the Soviet Union, it is natural to scrutinize all propaganda papers to make sure that they do not contain anything that might conceivably be used by the enemy to his advantage in the contest for strength.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

and consequently every plan is ^{necessarily} ~~absolutely~~ becomes unrelated to anything the Russians can accept; it not only makes demands that would open a tightly closed society, but it goes by stages each of which must appear to Soviet leaders as a gain for us and a loss for them.

So the paper plan acquires a new dimension of unreality, and this new dimension is actively dangerous, for it seems to assert that there is such a thing as a genuine scheme for disarmament which is without risks and sacrifices--a kind of something-for-nothing scheme whose fruits we should by rights enjoy--and could, if it were not for the Russians. In a world in which Soviet Power is real and great, it seems to us that it is ^{unwise} ~~foolish~~ to dangle such visions of sugar-plums before the people of the free nations. It cannot but complicate and perhaps make impossible that adjustment to painful reality which must precede any attempt at genuine agreement to moderate the arms race.

These strictures may seem to some merely a talkative way of dodging a difficult but necessary task. Does it follow, because some blueprints of arms limitation are unrealistic and misleading, that all must be? Why

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

should it not be possible to construct a scheme at once comprehensive and realistic? Is not such an effort necessary, indeed, as part of the preparation for any genuine effort at negotiation? Surely it is not intended to argue that this problem is so important that the best way to deal with it is to ignore it?

Questions of this sort may well be put to us in a tone of understandable annoyance. And of course, we recognize that a great deal of work and thought are needed in preparation for a genuine effort at negotiation. Much of this work, moreover, will turn on an investigation of the technical aspects of problems of control, inspection, and the like. Yet we persist in our belief that such inquiry should not be directed at the construction of anything so large as a disarmament plan. And our persistence may become more clear if we compare the present situation with the views prevalent in 1946 when the United States Government produced its first plan for the control of atomic energy. The comparison offers ^{some} a large number of contrasts, every one of which tends to reinforce our view that present inquiry and analysis should stop short of blueprints. At the same time this comparison may also suggest something

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

7

of the shape of a more limited and perhaps more useful analysis.

B. Changes in the Problem of Controlling Atomic Energy from 1946 to 1952

In 1946 the United States Government made a great effort to plan wisely for the international control of atomic energy. This effort resulted in the proposals made in the United Nations by Bernard Baruch, and eventually in the acceptance of the basic American scheme by the General Assembly of the United Nations. In essence this plan calls for complete control of the production and use of dangerous atomic materials by an international authority. It is the product of very great thought and devotion, and it will be a landmark in the history of efforts at arms regulation. But we are unable to avoid the feeling that it no longer fits the realities. In particular, we think that three great changes set off the present situation from that which was thought to exist in early 1946. They are an increase in the danger of atomic weapons, an increase in their general

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

8

political relevance, and a very considerable decrease in the technical requirements for an acceptable solution. These changes are closely interconnected, but it is the first two which make blueprints undesirable.

The increase in danger has been the subject of enough discussion already; it is in our view a great and pervasive reality which cannot be ignored except at the gravest peril. This danger is greater by six years than it was in 1946, greater by all the developments which are discussed in Part I. None of these sources of danger was wholly unforeseen in 1946, but obviously a danger foreseen is not the same as one which has become real. It was indeed something of this sense of greater danger ahead which lay behind the effort of the United States to get atomic energy under control.

In addition to the increase in general danger, a quite startling shift has occurred in the political meaning of atomic energy. In 1952 it is evident that the whole problem of arms limitation is saturated with political considerations of the most comprehensive kind. The whole of Soviet politics is now understood to be affected by the

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

9

idea of inspection, and the whole of American strategy is deeply committed to an unfettered use of atomic weapons against any aggressor--and these are only the largest of a multitude of similar considerations. The contrast with 1946 is extremely sharp, for then the object of those who framed the American proposals was to prevent the very developments which have now occurred. The very dangers we now face are a proof of the foresight of those who tried so hard to avoid them.

Because the atomic bomb is so dangerous, and because it is now so deeply entangled in international politics, we should recognize at once that we are not likely to find simple or perfect solutions. We are not now able to look at the world as a good one which we wish to make better; we are faced with a bad situation which we must try to keep from getting worse. This is no reason for despair, but it is a strong reason for judging all proposals not against perfection, but against the situation as it will become if nothing new is done.

It is just here that we are forced to reassert our conviction that comprehensive, separate blueprints are not desirable, for the atom or indeed for any weapons.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

10

The very importance of atomic energy precludes the possibility of making plans which deal with atomic energy alone--the very fact that the atom is central means that it is not separable; if it is to be regulated, much adjustment will be necessary in many areas. To plan for the atom we must plan for all of foreign policy, and this kind of planning is not done with blueprints--neither is it done by Panels of Consultants. In 1945 there was much reason to suppose that the very danger and importance of atomic energy might permit it to be treated as a somewhat separate question. Now the situation is reversed, and the danger and importance of the atom have become inseparable from its spreading political meaning. There can be no atomic energy plan now; there can only be a general policy in which the problems of atomic energy are well and truly weighed.*

Yet evidently, in framing a balanced general policy the technical realities of atomic weapons--and indeed of

*

It does not follow that the United States should at once denounce all that has been so painfully built up in the United Nations' plan for controlling atomic energy; our own view indeed is that the existing plan should be treated with great caution. See p. below.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

11

other weapons too--must be clearly understood. And equally plainly, such a technical assessment must be related to the political purposes which any limitation of weapons is expected to serve. Before we can ask what regulation may now be needed, it is important to look more closely at the character of the political objective of any such regulation. This too has changed since 1946.

C. The Political Objective of Arms Regulation: Prevention of a Surprise Knockout.

A basic requirement for any assessment of the technical problems of arms regulation is a clear understanding of the purpose of any agreement which may be reached. Too often it is supposed that disarmament is a sort of good-in-itself, unrelated to the rest of policy and therefore not to be considered in these terms. It will already be clear that we do not share this view, but our own position may be further sharpened if we note two of the political objectives we do not suppose to be relevant in our own analysis. These are the notion of disarmament as a part of the development of a limited world government, and the notion of agreement as an end in itself.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

12

We do not conceive it as our function to consider the possible value of some form of world federation as a means of achieving arms regulation. We are impressed by the quality of the citizens who urge this type of solution, but we hold that it falls outside our jurisdiction, since any such federation would require a series of national decisions at the highest level of constitutional policy. We do not reach the question whether such a government would indeed be desirable, for it seems to us plain that our own assignment is to examine the question of arms regulation within the framework of the basic political structures which now exist.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, we call attention to an argument whose current supporters are few, but which nevertheless we would disavow in the interest of clarity--the argument that it would somehow be good to get an agreement simply because the very act of agreement may have constructive effects. We cannot share this view. It is true that an agreement which has something real in it has the effect of creating a point of common interest and may therefore assist in the process of negotiating larger understandings. But we think that it is not possible to conclude an agreement for this purpose alone--in our view there can be no by-product when there is no product.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

13

at least in the present analysis,

The political meaning of arms limitation must lie somewhere between the unattainable goal of world government and the meaningless objective of agreement for agreement's sake.

Bearing this delimitation in mind, let us examine the question from another point of view—that of the analysis in Part One. This analysis suggested that the general case against attempting disarmament is modified, today, by certain special characteristics of the atomic arms race, characteristics which make it peculiarly dangerous. We believe that the central political purpose of arms limitation is that this danger should be removed. And we also believe that the very magnitude of the danger argues for the value of steps toward arms limitation which would have been dismissed as insufficient six years ago.

The danger of the atomic arms race, as we have seen, lies in the fact that if it continued unchecked for many years, the two great Powers are likely to develop the power to destroy each other. This danger is sharpened by the fact that the United States is increasingly committed to atomic weapons, and by the fact that

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

14

these weapons create between Moscow and Washington a military connection much closer than any which would otherwise exist in any field. It thus becomes highly desirable, ~~as a political objective,~~ for the United States to get this danger reduced and even removed if possible.

It is vital to understand, however, that the political objective ^{here} is to remove the danger of a knockout blow, and not, necessarily, to remove the atomic bomb. The two objectives are not at all the same, and the difference has a major effect upon the character of the technical arrangements which are necessary.

Here again comparison with the thinking of 1946 may be illuminating. In the first sharp light of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, it was generally supposed that a handful of atomic bombs might be decisive in any future war. Accordingly, the American proposals aimed at a system of control and inspection under which not a single bomb could be secretly fabricated. To reach this level of security an elaborate set of controls was necessary. Even if it should be possible, as is sometimes suggested,

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

15

to modify the plan by leaving "ownership" of dangerous facilities in national hands, it would still be based on strict controls and a very extensive system of inspection. For the purpose of the Plan is to see to it that no nation has any atomic bombs at all.

This purpose, we believe, goes far beyond anything that is required by the basic political objective of the United States. This political objective, we repeat, is to eliminate the danger of a sudden attack of such force as to destroy our society. For this purpose it is not necessary to be sure that the Russians have no atomic bombs at all; it is only necessary to be sure that they do not have a large number.

It is true, of course, that even a very few bombs could cause very heavy damage, and it is equally true that the atomic bomb carries with it a horror such that its certain and complete elimination is not a small objective. But we still feel that the central danger is that large atomic stockpiles may tempt men to desperate actions. We do not think a secret hoard of even fifty bombs would have this effect.

There is no

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

16

worse tactic than an unsuccessful attempt to knock out an adversary of superior over-all strength, and a small-scale atomic attack by the USSR would plainly have this character. No student of strategic atomic attack now believes that the military effect of small numbers of bombs could be decisive. Our own requirement for a rapid decision over the Soviet Union now runs to a four-figure total of bombs-on-target. From the point of view of any serious purpose, a handful of secreted atomic bombs would be of relatively little value--of insufficient value, we believe, to make it worth while to run the risk of discovery--and even in the Soviet Union such a risk, with such a weapon, would always be real.

We are therefore persuaded that the basic political objectives of the United States do not require a system of atomic energy control which would give a guarantee against any hiding of atomic bombs. In particular, we do not believe that it is essential to put all mines and plants under the control of a central authority, and we do not believe that it is necessary for that authority to attempt to constitute itself a vanguard for the world's nuclear physics. Indeed we are doubtful as to the present need

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

17

for any international authority at all, except perhaps for the administration of a modest system of inspection. For what is required is a knowledge that neither side has large numbers of secret atomic bombs. This knowledge seems attainable by methods more acceptable to a totalitarian state than those of the United Nations Plan.

D. The Shape of a Basic Scheme Today.

We are trying to secure protection against a surprise knockout blow; at the same time we must make sure that this protection is consistent with other objectives of our national policy. Clearly it will be necessary, then, to examine the methods of control which may be available and then to consider both their practicability and their impact on our whole policy of the defense of freedom.

Just as our examination of the dangers of the arms race began with the special problem of atomic energy, so our thinking about the problem of methods of arms regulation has turned, in the first instance, upon the problem of atomic weapons. As we shall presently indicate, we are far from certain that the control of atomic weapons is sufficient in itself to give us a reasonable security

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

13

from catastrophic surprise attack--and we are also doubtful that such control, alone, is a practicable notion from the standpoint of the safety of the West. But it seems to us entirely certain that some form of regulation of atomic weapons is ^a necessary major element in any attempt to get rid of the danger of a surprise knockout. So we begin with this problem.

1. The Control of Atomic Weapons.

In essence, the components of a scheme of atomic control which will help to protect against the threat of to a surprise knockout seem to us/be three.

First, it seems necessary to deal with existing plants and stockpiles in such a way that the bulk of the fissionable material produced to date ceases to be an active threat. This will require a close and careful inspection of existing plants and their records, in order to reduce within a tolerable margin the error in estimating the amount of fissionable material each nation has produced and must account for. We are persuaded that it would be quite impracticable for any nation to perpetrate a large-scale fraud if plants and records are duly opened; in particular we doubt that a fake set of records could be

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

19

imposed on technically competent inspectors--atomic energy facilities have their own built-in records of activity. On the basis of discussions with qualified scientists, we conclude that there should be no great difficulty in conducting this inspection in such a way as to reduce the margin of possible error to less than 10%. For the present this is an acceptable margin--unless the Soviet stockpile is much larger than we think.* But it should be understood that this first requirement--or something like it--is indispensable if there is to be any assurance against large stockpiles. And without some such clearing of the past, our second and third requirements become almost meaningless.

The second of the requirements we think essential is that all future production of fissionable material should be prohibited except by special agreement under stringent conditions of inspection. Here our balance of feeling is distinctly different from that which inspired

*

As the stockpile grows, this margin of error will gradually become unacceptable, and a more stringent inspection, going well beyond major atomic facilities, will become necessary. Evidently the existence of this margin of error argues for speed in moving toward an agreement. A similar pressure derives from the fact that thermonuclear

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

20

the United Nations ~~Plan~~, for we are inclined to urge a general prohibition which would leave much of the field of "peaceful" uses of atomic energy to be opened, if at all, by a later special agreement which might well be impossible to negotiate. We do not suppose that there will be any need to prohibit research installations of modest size (like Brookhaven), and in such installations the study of the peaceful uses of atomic energy could proceed. But it seems to us necessary and acceptable that the major plants for production of fissionable material should be shut down until special control agreements can be negotiated. We are prepared to accept the prospect of a situation in which mutual suspicion and fear make it impossible to reach a settlement in which the world could safely enjoy the benefits of atomic power. We are persuaded that for this generation at least the value of atomic power for peaceful purposes is not high, compared to the danger involved in large stockpiles of fissionable material. It will be a long time before atomic power is economically important, and it may well be that solar energy weapons may soon be developed in the U.S.S.R. The number of such weapons which could safely be left unaccounted for may be quite small.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

21

will supervene in any case. The limited and problematical benefits that might be obtained from fissionable material in the next twenty years are not comparable to the deadly danger that they will constitute, if not controlled, in the same span of time. Since it seems likely that a general prohibition may be far more manageable, from the standpoint of inspection and control, than any scheme in which large-scale production is allowed to continue, we conclude that the great purpose of averting danger might well be given priority by a general prohibition, and that the more limited purpose of gaining the benefit of large-scale atomic power can properly be left for later and more detailed settlement.

The third of our conditions for a general scheme of atomic-bomb control is that it should provide for a level of inspection sufficient to insure that no major violation of the basic prohibition occurs without discovery. The modesty of this requirement may best be understood by noting that with regard to Soviet knowledge of American activities, no change whatever would be required from the situation which already exists. Indeed, if the Soviet Union were even as far an open society as Nazi Germany,

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

22

no special arrangements would be necessary for other Powers to have a high level of certainty that no major atomic effort was being secretly undertaken in the USSR. The only thing that offers any difficulty here is the extraordinary secrecy of the Iron Curtain. Without better information than we now have, it would be impossible to feel secure against the danger of a secret Soviet stockpile.

It therefore seems inescapable that the Soviet Union must be brought to grant special rights of inspection on a scale sufficient to give assurance that no large atomic energy facilities are secretly at work. This does not mean that a horde of uniformed inspectors must be allowed to go wherever they please. It means rather that after the initial disclosure and accounting, it is necessary that a few hundred competent observers be allowed to travel reasonably freely and to ask questions of such people as factory managers. The level of access which is necessary is considerably overstated, in our view, by the word inspection. It seems to us more accurate to use the term facilitated intelligence. All that is required here is a level of accuracy in reporting of the sort that has been normal among military and commercial attaches

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

23

throughout the world for generations, except in the Soviet Union during the last twenty years.

We do not put forward these general criteria with any sense that they constitute a clear and definitive pattern of the problem of atomic weapons control. Not only is it possible that one or another of our requirements might be modified by other aspects of any settlement, but within the requirements as we have stated them, there is a certain amount of flexibility. In our view, indeed, it is just the somewhat open character of our criteria which may make them of some use; if arm regulation is to become a real objective of American policy it must accept the penalties of reality in international politics; among these are contingency and imperfection. The only way to get safety now, we suspect, is to seek the kind of agreement in which atomic stockpiles are reduced far below the politically critical level of several hundred; then a simple and roughhewn inspection will be sufficient.

Far from urging the completeness and certainty of our view of the problem of controlling the production of atomic bombs, then, we would emphasize the degree to which this question is connected with others. In particular,

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

24

there are three general questions in which there is a special connection whose character we have found important. Two of these--the problems of the USSR and the problem of the United States--are of such importance and complexity that we examine them in separate Parts of this Report. The third set of connections to which we now turn is that which relates atomic bombs to other weapons. There is more here than meets the eye, and what there is has a substantial effect on requirements for arms regulation.

2. Other Elements in a Satisfactory Scheme.

Although at present it seems likely that only atomic weapons could accomplish a surprise knockout, we are unable to believe that a realistic scheme of arms regulation can be limited to atomic weapons alone. In part this feeling derives from our sense of the requirements of the collective defense of the free nations, and is treated in Part IV below. In part, however, it arises from our feeling that long-term security from weapons of mass destruction is not likely to be obtained if an arms race should continue in every other sphere after atomic weapons are regulated.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

25

We are particularly impressed by the view that along with atomic regulation there should go a considerable reduction in the strength of long-range air power. Strategic Air Forces are an exceedingly expensive form of military strength, suffering as they do from the factors of extreme mechanical complexity and high rates of obsolescence. Any nation which makes a heavy effort in this field must appear to others to place a heavy reliance upon the type of attack whose extreme form is the surprise knock-out and, as a long-range air force is harder to build from scratch than atomic bombs, so the nation which concentrates on Strategic Air Power will seem to have taken a headstart toward the catastrophic capability. Moreover it cannot be certain that biological and chemical agents will always have their present rather limited military value, and these agents are of the sort which can well be manufactured in secret and in large quantities, even in a relatively open society. Any sudden advance in this field could have unspeakable consequences if a large long-range air force were ready at hand.

What is true for Strategic Air Forces is only less true, we think, for other and more traditional forms of

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

26

military strength. Nearly all forms of military power, when they are sufficiently emphasized, can give in some measure and at some range the kind of knockout capability which we think it so important to eliminate--the top-heavy ground forces of the Soviet Union might constitute precisely this kind of threat to Western Europe in a world in which only atomic weapons and strategic air forces were limited.

We are inclined to believe, then, that as part of any agreement to regulate atomic weapons there should also be a definite and considerable decrease in the general level of the armed forces of the opposing sides, and in particular we believe that there should be a heavy cut in the emphasis on long-range aircraft and other potential carriers of weapons of mass destruction.

Reductions in these non-atomic fields offer a peculiarly difficult problem to those who suppose that the arms race can be limited only by means of a formal written agreement. In the case of atomic weapons the problem of definition is easy; if the object is to prevent the manufacture of large stocks of fissionable material, a clear-cut agreement to this effect is not hard to write. But with "conventional" weapons it is not so easy, as the

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

27

history of disarmament discussions makes plain. One large difficulty is that of defining 'good' and 'bad' weapons. Intercontinental guided missiles are undesirable, but short-range missiles of similar basic design may be precisely what is needed for air defense, and air defense, as we shall see, is an important complement to arms regulation. Long-range heavy bombers are undesirable, but just where does the airplane change its character as it grows smaller and faster? The distinction between long- and short-range weapons is a real one, but it resists precise definition, and attempts to frame disarmament proposals on this basis have not had a happy record; what is defensive in one situation may be offensive for another, and agreement is rare.

Discussions of conventional armaments, moreover, are bound to lead into political questions--why do the British need so many cruisers, or the Russians so many security police? Not the least of the special characteristics of the atomic bomb itself is the fact that it is a weapon of a clear-cut and distinctive nature, not something which shades over toward other weapons in such a fashion as to make the definition of a true atomic weapon difficult or

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

20

arbitrary. Bombers and missiles do not have this useful characteristic--and as we have already remarked, the bomb itself, though plainly distinguishable in a technical sense, is increasingly becoming embedded in the pattern of military planning, both at the top, in the Strategic Air Command, and at lower levels, as in the work of NATO. To disentangle the bomb from these connections may be very difficult; to disentangle conventional weapons seems quite impossible.

The field of conventional armaments, ^{seems a good deal} ~~then, is~~ like the famous jellyfish. It cannot be picked up by one corner; it must be lifted all at once or not at all. Any workable agreement in this field, moreover, will in our view have to have a fairly simple and rugged character, avoiding detailed classification and basing itself on wide margins of safety. We think there is realism in the pattern which is sketched in the proposals put forward by the American, British, and French governments in the summer of 1953. These proposals suggested that there might be agreement limiting the armed forces of all nations to a level never exceeding a million and a half men. A general limitation of this character would offer

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

29

such wide margins of safety that it could be monitored by relatively unobtrusive observers of the sort that we have already described in sketching our notions of a realistic approach to atomic energy control. A modest violation would not be important, and a large one could not be hidden from a competent team of observers. A general agreement of this character would seem likely to carry with it a sharp decline in the ability of any nation to strike knockout blows by surprise. Yet, the fact that this sort of proposal is much better than the detailed complexities of traditional disarmament haggling does not make it likely that any such proposal will be acceptable to the Great Powers for many years. We must recognize that written agreements in the field of conventional armaments may well be impossible to get.

Part of the difficulty in this field, however, may be due to the sharp and somewhat arbitrary nature of written bargains, and we would emphasize our feeling that detailed written agreements are only one way, and perhaps not the most important, of dealing with the need for a decrease in levels of armament. It seems to us not impossible that a gradual shift of emphasis and lowering of

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

30

effort might be achieved simply in response to a decline in fear on both sides--or perhaps as part of an informal but clear-cut understanding as to the direction in which levels of armament should move. We do not mean to suggest that "conventional" armaments can be left to take care of themselves, but we do believe that policy should be sufficiently flexible and alert to adapt itself to the fact that paper agreements are a peculiarly taxing instrument for limiting such weapons.

Before we end this tentative and sketchy discussion of the problem of limiting the arms race by agreement, we should like to emphasize one form of armament which seems to us to be a definite reinforcement and support to any effort for arms regulation. This is the whole set of weapons and devices which can be used to strengthen the defense of the United States against attack by weapons of mass destruction.

Air defense and arms regulation are two different ways of achieving protection against the danger of a mass attack. If either one could be completely effective, the other would be unnecessary, but what is more important is that any increase in the effectiveness of one will

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

31

serve as a reinforcement to the other. The better the air defense, the less it is necessary for atomic energy control to be absolute, and if there is even a partial control of bomb production, the problem of air defense is very considerably simplified. We are persuaded that air defense and arms limitation are not alternative but complementary methods of meeting the paramount danger.

E. The Central Importance of the Atomic Bomb.

Important as other elements of the pattern of armaments are, it remains true, in our view, that the atomic bomb is the focal present problem, and that it must be a basic political objective of any effort at arms limitation to give assurance against large-scale atomic bombing. We believe that it is atomic warfare that now makes this arms race uniquely dangerous, and that it is the atomic bomb which is central to the conduct of atomic war.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

342

~~theless persuaded that~~ ^{fully} in the long-run there can prob-
 ably be no ^{fully} effective defense against atomic bombs if the
 stockpiles continue to multiply at the rates which are
 likely if no limitation can be negotiated. Improvements
 in air defense and restrictions on the means of bomb
 delivery can both be helpful in simplifying the con-
 tours of a satisfactory agreement to control atomic
 energy; a gain in air defense, moreover, may give badly
 needed time in which to work for a moderation of the
 atomic arms race. But these are auxiliary services. In
 the end it will always be ^{important} ~~necessary~~ to get some check-
 rein on the production of fissionable material and atomic
 bombs. A limitation on the stockpile is essential to
 any pattern of restraint for atomic warfare, and the res-
 traint of atomic warfare is the ^{first great} ~~necessary and sufficient~~
 condition for a release from the danger of a sudden sur-
 prise knock-out blow.

In emphasizing the present centrality, ~~and even~~
~~uniqueness~~ of the atomic bomb, we do not wish to be under-
 stood as suggesting that the bomb is a sort of accidental
 and arbitrary misfortune. We are inclined to the opposite
 view; we think that if it had not been the bomb, sooner or

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

33

later it would have been something else--the growth in human knowledge and power has always brought danger as well as opportunity, and as man learns more and more, the dangers as well as the opportunities increase. The bomb is not a freak. It is simply a particularly important source of destructive power, appearing in history at a time of great tension and uncertainty. Given the amount of destructive power that has been uncovered in recent generations, and the amount of international tension that has existed, it is hardly startling that there should be an atomic bomb and a dangerously divided world in the year 1952. ~~It is a wonder~~ what is surprising is that the bomb *at present stands in some measure* ~~stands alone--~~ we might almost expect to find a whole battery of weapons as dangerous and destructive. The fact that in the present context the bomb has a unique importance is not evidence that there is something queer about atomic energy. It is rather a fortunate accident, in that it *may* allow us to deal with atomic warfare as a *somewhat* ~~single~~ special case. The problem remains enormously difficult, in all conscience, but if there were a large variety of these terribly dangerous weapons, it would still be worse.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

34

Sooner or later, such additional weapons are likely to be developed, but if we have learned to pluck the sting from the atom, we shall be better able to deal with others as they appear. In any event, it seems wise to think of the atomic bomb not as a non-recurring accident, but as a forerunner of the weapons of the future.

But it is time now to return to problems of politics. We have suggested that comprehensive and detailed schemes of arms limitation are undesirable. We have tried to clarify the character of the political objective of any effort to limit the arms race, urging that the basic goal is to remove the possibility of a surprise knockout blow. We have suggested that for this purpose a level of security somewhat lower than that envisaged in the United Nations Atomic Energy Plan is acceptable. We have emphasized that it is unrealistic to suppose that atomic weapons can be controlled if an arms race continues in every other field, and we have suggested that perhaps a moderation of this race need not require the kind of elaborate paper bargain that is suggested by past efforts in this field. We have noted that improved air defense is complementary to arms regulation.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

35

Finally we have noted that at least for the present the atomic bomb itself is the overriding danger. Incomplete as it is, this set of considerations should now be connected with the very large sets of problems which are posed when we consider the two questions of negotiating with the Russians and shaping the general direction of American policy.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

PART THREE

ARMS LIMITATION AND NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE U.S.S.R.

In the end, if there is to be arms limitation, there must be an arrangement with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. It is therefore important to examine the problem of negotiating with the rulers of Russia. Even if the danger of modern armaments is so great as to give the objective of arms limitation real importance for present policy, and even if it is possible to sketch the outlines of a method of control which is not wholly unrealistic, it remains urgent to consider whether in fact it is desirable to attempt to reach any agreement of this character with the Soviet Union. This question can be answered only after a discussion of both the Soviet and the American aspects of the problem of negotiation. It seems best to take the problem of the Soviet Union first, if only because a grasp of the character of this problem is essential to any realistic analysis of specifically American questions.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

2

The following discussion falls into three sections. First we note the substantial considerations which suggest that agreement with the Soviet Union may well be impossible, while negotiation would be at best extremely difficult. Second, we explain the considerations which lead us to ^{believe} conclude that these difficulties ^{may be} are overbalanced by others which urge an effort to negotiate. Finally, we put forward, in a wholly tentative manner, two examples of the sort of discussion which might be suggested by American negotiators.

A. The Difficulties of Negotiation with the U.S.S.R.

Obviously it is not easy to negotiate with the rulers of the Soviet Union. Over and over again it has been demonstrated that the Soviet concept of negotiation in good faith is entirely different from that which is followed, or at least honored, in the West. The meaning of words has been distorted, the privacy of discussion has been violated, the most elementary standards of international good manners have been flagrantly violated. ~~So painful~~ have these experiences ^{have} been, ^{painful} and so little have the actions of the Soviet Union jibed with its professions

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

3

of peace that the United States Government has gradually reached the conclusion that it will be possible to negotiate usefully with the Russians only when there have been established "situations of strength" in the position of the non-Soviet world. Then and only then, in the prevailing view, may it be possible to reach agreements based on a recognition by the Soviet Union of the facts of life.

When attention is narrowed to the question of negotiation with regard to armaments, the difficulties appear to increase. If situations of strength are the only things which the Soviet Union can understand, it clearly becomes dangerous for the United States to consider the abandonment of any such situation. Those who bear the responsibility for the military safety of the West are naturally reluctant to take chances in any bargain on the limitation of arms. In the early years after the war, the pattern of settlement at which western statesmen were aiming was one of relatively cordial cooperation; in working for such a world, it was perhaps appropriate to discount dangers which seemed hypothetical. But today any agreement to moderate armaments must be judged in the light of its effect upon the balance of power all over the world.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

4

Yet another difficulty in negotiation arises from the fact that the United States and her allies have little trustworthy information as to the real military power of the Soviet Union. International negotiations ordinarily rest upon the ability of both sides to form some reasonable assessment of their respective bargaining positions. Any nation negotiating with the Soviet Union must find it hard to reach any such assessment. The responsible military leaders of the Western powers have firmly in mind the great and evident fact that the Soviet Power is hostile; as they exercise their professional responsibility to advise on the conduct of negotiations for the limitation of armaments, their first concern will almost surely be for the establishment of iron-clad safeguards against the possibility that these negotiations might in some way turn to the advantage of the enemy. And since they are so largely ignorant of the character of the enemy, the number of safeguards tends to multiply, and the chance of successful negotiation is correspondingly diminished. Nor do we ^{believe} suggest that the considerations which govern this kind of military counsel are unimportant. On the contrary, they

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

5

appear to be soundly based upon a realistic assessment of the power and menace of the Soviet Union under its present leadership.

Still more significant is the possibility that Soviet leaders may simply not desire any agreement and indeed be immune to argument and discussion on the point. The difficulties which are posed for American negotiators by their own well-justified fears may be overridden--as we ^{incline to} think they should be--by larger considerations of policy, but no American decision can of itself persuade the Russians to accept any effective international control, even if it be of the relatively unintrusive kind we have outlined.

The Soviet Union might well resist any agreement that would do any good--any agreement, that is, which would give reasonable assurance against mass attack with atomic weapons. Any number of characteristics of Soviet thought suggest themselves in support of this possibility: the expectation of Western collapse, the mistrust of Western purposes, the disposition to use negotiation as an instrument of propaganda and covert expansion, and the fear of contaminating contact with the non-Soviet

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

6

world. But we are inclined to think that in the last analysis Soviet mistrust of any Western proposals, and Soviet recalcitrance in any negotiation would be based on two general attitudes: first, a conviction that there is no such thing as a mutually beneficial agreement, in the long run, between the Soviet and non-Soviet worlds, and second, an unwillingness to permit a permanent gap in the Iron Curtain, however small it might be.

There are two fundamentally different approaches to all international negotiations. One is that in such negotiations there is always a winner and a loser; the other is the view that both sides can gain in well-conducted negotiations, while both can lose from a failure to reach agreement. Arms regulation, we think, is possible only for statesmen who believe there can be diplomatic dealings in which both sides win, and we think it uncertain that Soviet leaders hold this belief.

Any realistic proposal for an international agreement to limit the arms race must be based on the assumption that this race is so dangerous to both sides that both will gain if it can be limited, at least in the sense that both sides are in danger of enormous common losses if the

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

7

race continues. This is the view which we have been forced to take by our own examination. Without minimizing the large and critical issues which divide the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., or denying the reality of the contest between them, we are nevertheless persuaded that they have an overriding common interest in limiting the growth and misuse of weapons of sudden mass destruction. If we did not take this view, we could argue for arms regulation only on the ground that it provided some advantage to us and some corresponding and equal disadvantage to the Soviet Union, and on our own analysis it would be very surprising indeed if the Soviet Union found such proposals acceptable; essentially they would be a diplomatic trap. There is little room for arms regulation in a world where the rulers of the great powers think in terms of a winner-take-all contest.

We think it at least possible that the Soviet Union is ruled by men whose basic conception of world politics is that there are no basic common interests between Stalinists and others, and who therefore think that there is no genuine possibility of a mutually beneficial long-term agreement to limit armaments.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

8

The Soviet record, both in word and deed, gives strong support to the view that Soviet rulers divide the world sharply into friends and enemies, and assess all foreign affairs in terms of the contest for the victory of Soviet-dominated Socialism. Conflict is generally regarded as unavoidable and since the object is victory, the game must go to one side or the other. The mainstream of Soviet writings contains little discussion of any disaster common to Communists and non-Communists, and such a concept may well be fundamentally foreign to the Soviet mind. It may be that there is for the Kremlin this fundamental obstacle to holding any such view; if it should ever be accepted, the notion of permanent coexistence might follow, and after that might come a sense that the West was not all bad; such a conclusion might be deeply subversive.

This grim possibility is only partly modified by the evident willingness of Soviet leaders to agree to local arrangements, often having considerable scope. It is possible that negotiation for arms limitation might begin with some issue sufficiently modest in character to have the same relative meaning as a local truce in Berlin or Korea--but in the end any arms agreement which is to eliminate the central danger we are

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

concerned with must have a permanence and solidity rather larger than what is implied in the notions of truce and tactical accommodation. Such an agreement can be even possible only if both sides believe they stand to gain by the choice, not just tactically, but for a long time, and in a fundamental way.

We fear, therefore, that no major agreement on atomic weapons will be possible unless the Soviet Union is able to understand and accept the notion of a long-term--if limited--common interest in this subject; we think it doubtful that this notion is accepted today, and we feel sure that it will not be easy to get it across to Soviet leaders by any means at the disposal of American policy.

A more limited but even sharper difficulty is presented by the fact that arms limitation inevitably involves some breach in Soviet "security". In our view what is needed falls well short of any requirement that Russian become an open society--and we are doubtful of arguments which assert that only when all societies are open will peace be possible. Still there can be no escape from the fact that the Soviet Iron Curtain, in

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

10

its present shape, is a barrier to any acceptable arms regulation. Yet the thickness of that curtain is probably dictated at least in part by what are compelling internal necessities in the view of the Kremlin. At the very least it seems clear that the Soviet Union does not share our Western view that Iron Curtains are inherently bad, and will not suppose that something so carefully woven should be rent just out of good will or in the common interest.

The sum of the obstacles which stand in the way of any useful agreement on arms regulation--simply on the Soviet side--is formidable indeed: Soviet leaders are peculiarly difficult to talk to; they have shown themselves continuously hostile; their secrecy is so great that we can hardly tell what sort of agreement to seek; they may well be unable to conceive of an agreement that genuinely serves the common interest for the long run; they have a stake of undetermined size in the Iron Curtain, which cannot remain wholly intact if any genuine agreement is reached and goes into effect. It is evident that negotiations for arms regulation would be difficult at best; and the odds against success might well be high. What have

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

11

us to say in defense of our feeling that nevertheless the effort should be made?

B. The Persistent Urgency of Negotiation

The path to arms limitation is certainly long and tortuous; it may be impossible. But we remain persuaded that it would be a grievous error to give up without trying; we believe that it is strongly desirable to make a new and wholly serious effort to negotiate on this issue with the U.S.S.R.

This conviction we hold subject to two important conditions. The first is that the United States should itself be prepared to accept a pattern of arms regulation in which a major feature is the elimination of all large-scale atomic capabilities. The second is that the negotiations should be private, authoritative, purposeful, and in every sense real. The first of these requirements we consider at length in Part Four; it is plainly of critical importance. The second deserves brief comment here.

The pattern of negotiation we think necessary is opposite in almost every respect to that of the existing disarmament discussions. We think that serious negotiation would require a different place, different men, and different purposes. A Commission of the United

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

12

Nations is not the right place, because it is necessarily an open forum, while genuine negotiations require private discussion. The officers now at work are not the right ones, because serious negotiation on this subject should engage the constant attention of the top-ranking policy officers of the Government.¹ The present purpose is not right, because the wholly sincere first intentions have become subordinated to a desire for propaganda advantage. And finally, the time is not ripe for serious negotiation, because the United States Government has not put itself in a position from which it can move seriously toward a limitation of atomic warfare. In this sense the present discussions are quite unusual.

Privacy, authority, purpose, and reality--these are the characteristics we see as necessary for any effort at negotiation which is seriously directed at the objective of arms limitation. This is the sort of negotiation we are talking about in the following discussion.²

1. None of this is intended in any way to disparage the ability and devotion of the men currently charged with this work; they have shown uncommon quality and skill, though in a task which we are bound to regard as wrongly conceived.

2. One important question is whether privacy requires

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

13

Our general feeling is
1 ~~We believe~~ that the many large difficulties which the Soviet Union offers to negotiation are in the ^{end} ~~main~~ a series of arguments in favor of an effort to negotiate.
For we
We believe that the very act of negotiation is a way of trying to change the Soviet mind, and also a way of increasing our own knowledge of Soviet reality. Of course it is always possible for the Soviet Union to behave in such a way as to make serious discussion impossible, but we do not find any evidence that this has always been Soviet practice, and we believe that the American government is sufficiently skillful in the arts of diplomacy to protect itself against this sort of contumacy. We think no harm can be done by an effort to get into a genuine and private discussion at a high level, and we believe such conversations can in fact be conducted if it is made clear that the intent is real, and not propagandist. Once past the door, we believe that the process of negotiation itself is the best available means of trying to deal with more substantial difficulties offered by the Soviet Union.

that the discussion be limited to the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., or whether major allies of one or both should be included. This point falls outside our main argument, but it is touched on further at *Part IV, p. 27, 7.* below.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

14

If it be true, for example, that the Soviet Union now finds it hard to conceive of the possibility that there may be future events which are fundamentally destructive to both sides, then it is of the highest importance that we miss no opportunity to press upon the Kremlin a more realistic view. It may not be possible to communicate the reality of the danger; public statements in the Western World have repeatedly explained how dangerous the atom is, and it may be argued that if the Kremlin has not accepted this diagnosis, it is not for lack of information. Yet we think it possible that private and authoritative representations may have a weight altogether different from that which is attached to public statements, however solemn. This difference is plain enough in our own assessment of Soviet words, for we quite properly give very close attention to the private comments of Soviet officials, even when the official is minor and the comment trivial. We think that this distinction may be at least equally important in the Soviet mind.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

15

Not only would the private word of the American government have greater weight than public statements, but there might also be special significance in the decision of the United States to communicate with the Soviet Union on this particular matter. For there need be no subterfuge about the special interest of the United States here--^{indeed} that special interest could ^{perhaps} indeed be emphasized, and it would be understandable in Soviet terms--it would be nothing more or less than American fear of the Soviet atomic capability. The communicability of the American interest in the matter is important, because discussions between two hostile powers are seldom persuasive if they are couched solely in terms of an appeal to some uncertain common interest. It

It must be ^{recognized} granted at once that an effort to communicate our sense of danger to the Soviet Union has its pitfalls. It would be important to make it entirely plain that these fears are not accompanied by any loss of nerve. Otherwise the Kremlin might simply conclude that it could safely increase the pressure of its expansionism at one or more selected places. But we do not believe that a forceful exposition of genuine fears is

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

incompatible with a high measure of clarity about the dangers of Soviet adventures--indeed we think the two could go well together.

So important do we think it to make sure that no chance is missed in this area that we are inclined to believe the American negotiators should not hesitate to be highly explicit as to the character of the danger that is developing. It is of critical importance that it should be made clear that our fears are not simply sentimental weakness, the fear of men who are terrified by a modest level of human suffering and unwilling to break the eggs that are needed for the omelet. For this purpose it is essential that the discussion have a reality that cannot be extracted from statements in which there is no quantitative element. It is our considered opinion that it would be well for the world if Soviet rulers were plainly informed of the realities of atomic power in terms somewhat like those we have used in Part II, above.

It is almost impossible to overemphasize the importance of a sound understanding by Soviet leaders of the power of atomic weapons. Such an understanding is not merely the essential preliminary to any agreement on the limitation of atomic weapons; it is also one of the

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

17

few possible substitutes for such a limitation. Uncertain and dangerous as it must be, a world full of atomic weapons will be still more hideously precarious if in fact the Soviet Union does not have a proper fear of such weapons. It may not be within the power of the American government to produce such a reasonable fear, but this is not the sort of objective in which we should refuse to use the best weapons at our disposal; one of these is the voice of our own diplomacy.

The validity which may attach, in Soviet thinking, to a serious and documented American statement on the danger of atomic weapons can hardly be claimed for any American statement about the Kremlin's policy on the Iron Curtain. There is very little we can say, publicly or privately, that can be expected to modify Soviet thinking on this point. But if we cannot make the Kremlin love the Curtain less, we can perhaps communicate the significant point that our own basic objectives in the field of arms limitation stop well short of destroying all Soviet privacy. They clearly require that there be a hole in the Curtain, but this hole has to serve only a limited purpose, and as long as it serves this limited purpose it can be cut in a fashion to suit Soviet internal desires.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

S-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

18

This sort of modification of the tightly closed Soviet system probably falls well short of the kind of thing that is implied in all American pronouncements on the point up to now, and it might possibly elicit a response somewhat less stony than those we have so far received.

But the point which we would emphasize here is not the chance that the Soviet Union might respond favorably and quickly to modest proposals about the Iron Curtain, for we are inclined to the view that real modification of Soviet security policy will be possible only if a sense of common danger is supplemented by some balancing concessions from the West.¹ The real point about a serious discussion of the Iron Curtain is rather that it is a great opportunity for a sharpening of our understanding of the realities of the Soviet position. Negotiation of the sort we are urging is certain to give important information about the real character of Soviet thinking. Such information would be of great value with respect to the specific problem of Soviet concern for security, in that it might permit

1. A sample of the sort of thing that may be involved here is given in Section C below, at p .

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

19

a realistic estimate of the sort of "facilitated intelligence" we could successfully urge. In a wider context, we see similar advantages in gaining a better knowledge of the true Soviet view of the dangers of the arms race; if the evidence here should be discouraging, that is perhaps even more important to know.

These samples indicate, we think, the general value of negotiation as an instrument for probing the Soviet mind. This is one of the few methods available for enlarging the limits of ^{our} understanding of Soviet reality, and as we have already suggested, we believe that one of the gravest difficulties of American policy is the problem of reaching reasonable judgments about the Soviet Union. Anything which tends to increase our confidence in our own judgment of Soviet thinking and purpose is bound to be helpful in the forming of policy; this is true both specifically in the effort to regulate the atomic arms race and generally in the ^{forming} of all policy toward the Soviet Union.

We believe, indeed, that well-conducted negotiations may in themselves be helpful in providing information of the sort that we have described as "facilitated intelligence." We know the duplicity of which Soviet

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

20

diplomats are capable, but we believe that even the most accomplished liar will always tell more of the truth than he intends. Present American estimates of Soviet reality rely heavily on discussions which have occurred in the past--though few of these discussions have had the seriousness we believe desirable and possible in the effort to regulate atomic energy.

All in all, we believe there is a high utility in serious negotiation, even if it should have no immediate success. This can only be true, we must repeat, if the negotiations have the privacy, authority, purpose, and reality we have urged, and if they are to have this character, they must proceed from a considerably reoriented American policy.

C. Samples of Negotiation

In discussing a subject so fraught with difficulties as arms regulation, it is a good deal easier to state general arguments in favor of negotiation than it is to offer useful counsel about the correct way to negotiate, or the detailed proposals which might be put forward by the United States. In part this difficulty, in our view, is inherent in the nature of real

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

21

negotiations; our skepticism of detailed blueprints is closely connected with our feeling that it is the essence of important diplomatic undertakings that they take shape gradually. We are ^{persuaded} convinced that any useful arrangement regulating the arms race must be allowed to take its life and form from the course of a genuine exchange in negotiations. Yet even if we are right in contending that it is unwise to try to predetermine the results, it remains important to have some idea of how to begin. The football quarterback seldom plans his whole game ahead of time; too much depends on his opponents' reaction. Yet he will usually have a set of general purposes and he will also have a fairly concrete and specific plan for the first few plays of the game. We have indicated our view of the general purposes of an attempt to negotiate; we are now under some obligation to suggest useful opening moves.

Even if we assume--as we have throughout this part of our report--that the United States ^{will} has in some degree ^{have} prepared herself for the purpose of opening negotiations, it is not easy to find useful specific proposals with which efforts to reach agreement might

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

22

begin. Probably the first words in any serious discussion would turn on the elemental and decisive facts of the atomic danger, and we have already seen that if any sense of this reality can be communicated (and still more if it is found to exist already), a great deal will be gained. But exhortation of this sort cannot live alone. Both to underline the reality of our concern and to make progress with the hard problems of reducing the danger, we must have some suggestion as to what to do about it. We have considered two different lines of discussion which seem to us to suggest something of the possible flavor of a genuine negotiation.

First, we have thought it possible--at least before the recent Eniwetok tests--that a real improvement might be effected if the two nations could agree to conduct no further tests of atomic weapons. Such an agreement might, for a limited time, have given reasonable assurance against the addition of major new weapons (such as thermonuclear bombs) to the atomic arsenal, since a weapon not yet tested is not of very high value to military planners. This sort of agreement has the particular advantage that it would not involve the issue of inspection, since each side can already inform

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

23

itself of the occurrence of tests by its rivals; physical intelligence on this matter is sufficiently certain to give real protection, in spite of curtains of secrecy. At the same time a standstill agreement on tests would be a genuine act of recognition, by both sides, of the fact that the atomic arms race is dangerous, and as such it would be a real act of the sort which might be expected to make further discussion easier.

There is a certain fragility in this idea. If it continued for a long period as the only existing point of agreement, it would eventually become meaningless; as calculations are refined, tests become less essential. And of course the proposal is not put forward until now that the United States has actually tested a thermonuclear device, any proposal of this sort is bound to have a very uneven appearance. Here we have an illustration of the degree to which the value of any concrete proposal about negotiations is dependent upon time and circumstance.

A second possibility which we have considered turns upon the possibility of an arrangement in which the real bargain is not an exchange of identical undertakings, but rather a trade of very different concessions

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

24

which are of approximately equal importance to each side. If the principal Russian request is for a prohibition of atomic weapons and the first American need is for a gap in the Iron Curtain, may it be possible to combine the two in some way? Is it hopelessly unrealistic that the United States should offer to agree ^{to} in some form of prohibition of atomic weapons in return for a really good look at the Russian military capability? At first glance this proposal may appear to give away our basic advantage--but it is worth recalling that the whole object of negotiation, in our view, is to create a situation in which we have no atomic advantage because stockpiles of atomic bombs no longer exist. Before it enters into any genuine negotiation of any kind, the United States will have to have faced and understood the implications of this purpose (see Part IV D below). Once it has done so, our agreement to prohibit use of the bomb--which is in essence an agreement not to use it first--may seem a fair concession in return for a real knowledge of Soviet Power.

Both of these conceivable proposals--and in particular the second--may have many variations. Both seem

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

25

to us to offer handholds on reality, in that both seem connected to the real interests of both sides and also to the common danger. But we do not wish to press them with the seal of certainty; they are rather samples of the sort of proposal which might be usefully examined, if the government should share our opinion of the danger of the atomic arms race, and if it should be able to move against that danger by diplomacy. We must now turn, in our Fourth and final Part, to a discussion of the difficulties in the way of any such government, and to a summary account of our own sense of the things it may in fact be possible to do.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

PART FOUR

THE PROBLEM OF AMERICAN POLICY

The constantly growing atomic stockpiles are dangerous. They are so dangerous that it is ^{seems} reasonable to give attention to schemes of control less sensitive and more robust than the plan which was evolved in 1946. And the regulation of the arms race is an objective which makes it highly desirable for the United States to undertake serious negotiations with the Soviet Union. These are the conclusions with which we come to the large problem of basic American policy toward the regulation of atomic energy.

It is obvious at once that in this last phase of our inquiry we must give full weight to other aspects of policy. The fact that atomic weapons are dangerous does not, in and of itself, make the general Soviet danger non-existent; the fact that negotiations are desirable does not make them possible--and indeed the fact that they may be desirable from the standpoint of the atomic danger does not necessarily make them desirable from the point of view of American policy as a whole. If we are correct in our assessment of the importance of the atomic arms race, it is true that the problem of

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

2

atomic stockpiles is a large and urgent one, which should never be absent from official thinking and often at the center. But we have tried throughout this report to emphasize that atomic problems are connected with other matters; this connection we must have constantly in mind as we consider the impact of our argument on the shape and direction of American foreign policy.

The consequences of the inter-connectedness of policy are many. One of them is worth stating here at the beginning of this part of the inquiry: because of the complexity of these interconnections no human being can pretend to be able to make a precise calculation of the exact balance of policy which will give the proper weight to every relevant consideration; and in any event such a balance can never be static. This difficulty is compounded when the assessment is that of a Panel of Consultants whose specific assignment has been to consider the area of disarmament; while officers of the government have been more than ready to answer our questions, we have felt under a certain obligation not to extend our inquiries unreasonably. We have sought such light as may permit a reasonable judgment of the general relevance

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

of our problem to other problems, but we have not made any general survey of the whole range of policy.

Both the essential uncertainty of the topic and our own limited competence argue against the desirability of our drawing sharply defined and certain conclusions, except in limited areas. On larger questions it has seemed to us more appropriate merely to indicate the general thrust of our inquiry and to outline its implications, as we understand them. We have limited ourselves, in the main, to problems on which our assessment seems to have a particularly significant bearing. Some of these are fairly specific--like ^{Continental} Air Defense and the shape of negotiations in the United Nations. Some are more general, bearing on such matters as the future balance of strategic planning and the proper method of judgment and decision in the Government. But we emphasize because it is after all the core of our assignment: the problem of shaping policy so that we can ^{work for} accept a limitation of atomic weapons. Another we emphasize because it is really the origin of all our concern: the danger is real and must become better understood throughout the government and among our people; this indeed is where our

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

4

conclusions and recommendations begin.

A. Candor About the Danger

The central fact from which this inquiry has developed its course is that the American stockpile has been doubling every year and a half for seven years, and is likely to continue to multiply at something like this rate in the immediate future. The pattern of atomic development is such that what is true for the United States can well be true for the Soviet Union, allowing for a time-lag and a somewhat more limited sustaining economy. Within the time-span of current planning the Soviet Union may have many hundred atomic bombs; within ten or fifteen years she may have ten thousand--the actual numbers are not really as important as the fact that they are bound to multiply in time. Given the state of tension which exists between the United States and the USSR, and given the degree to which American policy is itself dependent upon the atomic bomb, this prospect is necessarily one of very great danger.

We believe that both the American government and the American people are at present very far from showing a responsible awareness of this danger, and accordingly

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

5

we believe that it is a matter of urgency that such awareness should become much more widespread. The only way we know of to accomplish this task is for those who are fully informed on the subject of atomic energy to take the rest of the government and the people into their confidence, and to do it by a straightforward statement of the size and shape of the growing destructive power of atomic weapons. We see no escape from the duty of including in such a statement an effectively informative account of the quantities and rates of increase which are involved. We believe, in short, that it is essential for the American government and people to know the basic meaning of the atomic arms race; without this knowledge, there can be no basic understanding of the mounting peril.

We do not think it possible to overestimate the importance of such an act of candor. It has been our experience that without a direct and informed understanding of the rates of atomic development, most men are reluctant to give full value to warnings which they hear from others. The more responsible the citizen, indeed, the more he is likely not to pay full attention to the problem

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

6

of atomic weapons as long as present security restrictions are enforced. A man who is in the habit of trying to think in rational terms will naturally hesitate to attempt a judgment on any matter on which he knows himself to lack important information; he will tend to leave the problem to those who ^{know the facts.} ~~are possessed of this information.~~ And this pattern holds within the government as well as outside it. Awed by the disaster that is supposed to be involved in any leak of stockpile figures to the Soviet Union, men in positions of very high authority have often deliberately chosen to be ^{the basic facts of atomic development.} ~~uninformed about the atomic stockpile.~~ And when they are uninformed, they necessarily act without an awareness of the meaning of the atomic arms race.

But more than facts and figures will be required to alert the government and the nation to the dangers of the atomic contest; it will also be necessary to direct attention specifically and repeatedly to the fact that the atomic bomb works both ways. The official position of the United States toward the Russian atomic bomb has regularly been that this development is simply something we expected and planned for. This position may well have

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

7

been desirable at the time of the first Soviet explosion, in order to prevent a possible reaction of hysteria. But three years have passed; the present danger is not of hysteria but of complacency, and for this complacency the public statements of the United States Government are largely responsible. The overwhelming balance of official comment on atomic energy, both from the Executive Branch and from the Congress, tends to emphasize the importance of the atomic bomb as part of the American arsenal. There is an altogether insufficient emphasis upon its importance as a Soviet weapon.

In matters of this sort there is no substitute for authoritative official warnings. Many private citizens have drawn attention to the dangers involved in Soviet possession of a growing stockpile, but in the face of official silence on the subject, such warnings are not likely to be effective. It is well known that this is a topic surrounded by secrecy, and the only voice which has full authority is that which comes from high in the government. If the President and his advisors see no reason to worry about the Soviet atomic bomb, the citizen may well conclude that he need not worry either; the somewhat plaintive warnings of a

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

8

few outside observers, and the cryptic comments of men who are informed but not willing to talk freely, have little effect.

Another point which is widely and dangerously overlooked is the fact that the advantage of our head-start is constantly decreasing, even if we are still keeping the same lead we had, or even increasing it. When we had a hundred bombs and the Soviet Union had none, we had a large advantage. When we have a thousand and they perhaps have a hundred, our advantage may be even larger, because a thousand bombs may permit a really decisive blow, while a hundred hardly can. If we have ten thousand bombs when the Soviet Union has a thousand, we may still have a certain advantage, because our capability to destroy them may be clearcut, while they may only be able to cause us some tens of millions of casualties. But by the time the Soviet Union has ten thousand bombs, it

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

9

really will not matter very much how many we have. This point has been recognized, in half its meaning, by official hints that a time may soon arrive when we have all the bombs we need--but the more significant half of it is the fact that a similar time will also come for the Russians--and its coming cannot be prevented by the fact that our own pile can always be larger than theirs.

We believe, then, that the United States government should tell the story of the atomic ^{danger} ~~panic~~, and in particular we believe that it should ^{explain the rate and} ~~reveal its~~ ^{impact of atomic production} ~~characteristics and magnitudes,~~ that it should emphasize the growing capability of the Soviet Union, and that it should direct attention to the fact that beyond a certain point very little is gained by "keeping ahead of the Russians." We believe that official disclosure and recognition of these realities is the basic condition for a sound national attitude toward the problems of the atomic arms race.

Objections to this course usually rest on two basic arguments. The first is that it would be folly to let the Soviet Union know either our stockpile figures or the character of our fear of atomic attack. The second is

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

10

that if the American people learn of their peril, they may either lose heart in the struggle to stand firm against Soviet expansionism or perhaps go overboard in favor of a preventive war. We are not persuaded by either of these contentions. We have already argued at some length, (at Part III, B above), our belief that it is desirable for the Soviet Union to learn that we are concerned by the danger of atomic weapons, and as for our supply of bombs, we believe that it is now large enough so that it is desirable to make sure that the Russians fully understand its power. The danger of a slackening of the national will we dismiss on two separate grounds: first, it is our fundamental belief that this country does better when it knows the truth, and second, we believe that the truth is bound to come out sooner or later, and we are sure that it is a great deal better for the American people to learn about their danger while there is still time to think about it; it would not be good for the awful truth to dawn suddenly on a nation that had been deceived by an untrusting government. We are bound to admit that there is danger in telling the truth, but it seems to us insignificant when compared to the danger of concealing it.

In addition to the legitimate arguments for

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

~~T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T~~

secretary, there is in the field of atomic energy a sort of what mystical sense that it is always enormously dangerous to reveal anything. And in particular there has been a tendency to suppose that stockpile figures must be concealed at almost any cost from prying eyes. We must bluntly state our considered view that this is nonsense. There is nothing in stockpile figures that makes it desirable to keep them secret, and they have a meaning and importance for the framing of policy such that there is urgent necessity for their publication. We are persuaded that there has been a great deal of confusion in our national thinking about atomic secrets. There are processes and techniques which it is extremely important to keep secret as long as possible, but there is nothing in stockpile figures which tells the Russians how to make bigger and better bombs. Such figures, indeed, can only be approximate in any case, since a given amount of fissionable material can be used to make either a large number of moderate-sized bombs or a smaller number of large bombs, or something in between. The public needs reassurance, however, and so does the government--and it will do no harm to make sure that the Russians know for certain

~~T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T~~

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

13

what they very possibly can guess already to a fairly close margin.

Just as our own inquiry has been based throughout on a sense of the central importance of the realities of the ~~competing stockpiles~~ ^{atomic contest}, so we think that there can be no appropriate adjustment of American policy until these realities are brought home to the American government and people. As long as the truth of the atomic arms race is buried in a very few informed minds (and often pushed back out of daily consideration even by those who know the truth), there is no possibility of framing policy in such a fashion as to take due account of the national danger. American foreign policy rests upon two great forces; one is the power of public opinion, and the other is the interplay of energies in a large and sprawling government of checks, balances, offices, and men. At present both of these great forces, in very large measure, are governed by a basically insufficient assessment of the realities of the world in which we live. It is bad enough to be in a very dangerous world; it is still worse to be unaware of the danger.

We believe that nothing else is possible, in all

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

12

that bears upon decreasing the national peril, until the government and the people are accurately informed. We also believe that even if the act of informing them were to stand alone, and even if nothing else should be accepted from among our suggestions and recommendations, this act of enlightenment would be enormously desirable. For in the end it is the province of the nation to make its own foreign policy, and we are not among those who believe that we are necessarily wiser than the people and government of the United States, when they are truly informed. The analysis which we have attempted rests on our own conviction that the danger of the atomic arms race is great and growing. Other and better conclusions may be reached by others, starting from a similar awareness of danger; we hope that this may be the case. It is precisely because we respect the power and judgment of our government and people that we so strenuously object to a situation in which all Americans excepting a handful of overworked and harried officials are deprived of basic information which is not worth keeping secret.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

14

B. The Indivisibility of Policy.

If it is correct to conclude that the atomic arms race is full of danger, it follows almost at once, we believe, that this danger should be kept in mind in considering nearly every major foreign policy decision made by the American government. Any really great problem has bearing in a wide range of apparently separate matters-- this is the character of our relationship to Soviet Russia and of our dependence on the free nations of Western Europe, to name only two of the great realities of our foreign affairs; it is also true, we are persuaded, of the ^{arms race} ~~atomic bomb~~ in all its aspects. This sharp relevance, ~~of the atom~~, in our view, argues strongly for keeping the basic authority and responsibility well coordinated and even centralized in the highest reaches of the Executive Branch of the Government.

The meaning of this conclusion may become clearer if we note one or two of the existing situations which seem to us unsound. One which we have already discussed is the effort to discuss disarmament in the United Nations. Here the responsible officers are not only uninformed as

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

15

to the realities of the atomic arms race; they also lack the support of a government which has taken due account of the reality of the atomic ^{danger} peril, and the policy which they pursue has only a nominal connection with that which is being followed by the State Department as a whole and by the Department of Defense. It would not be much use, in this situation, to give full access to atomic energy data to every member of the office which is concerned with disarmament; these officers would still be unable to act effectively as long as their superiors suppose that these negotiations can be left to run a course governed mainly by considerations of "psychological warfare." To delegate responsibility for such matters is to assert that they are not of central importance--and in the case of the regulation of ^{assurances} atomic weapons we believe such an assertion to be fundamentally wrong.

An equal error exists, we think, in the developing tendency to leave the responsibility for thinking about the use of the atomic stockpile to military men, and mainly to the officers of a single command. We do not criticize or condemn those who are now called on to

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

~~T-O-P~~ ~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

18

make such plans, any more than we do those who are working on the problems of disarmament in the United Nations. Our feeling is rather is both that the basic method of organization is wrong, and that decisions are being forced upon officers whose field of concern is insufficiently wide. The assignment of the Strategic Air Command is to knock out the enemy in the event of war; it is not the responsibility of officers holding this assignment to consider whether their methods and planning are fundamentally consistent with the general policy of the United States. In particular, it is not their function to consider the relationship between their plans and the dangers which are involved for the American people in any resort to atomic warfare. Considerations of this magnitude belong to higher authority. But if higher authority is to discharge its responsibilities here, it must retain control over the shape and direction of strategic thinking. In particular, it must make sure that such planning is infused with an understanding of the fact that the atomic danger is real, not only for the Russians but for us. This means that atomic weapons are not a one-way instrument, and accordingly it means, we believe, that our own

~~T-O-P~~ ~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

17

Decisions about the use of atomic weapons must be governed at every stage by men who have a wider concern than that of destroying the Soviet will to resist.

Part of the confusion which now besets our policy toward atomic energy derives from a simple unawareness of the reality of the danger; to the degree that this is the difficulty a real improvement might be expected simply as a result of a decision to take the course of candor in this matter. But part of the difficulty also lies in the diffusion of responsibility. Useful as we think it would be, a disclosure of atomic facts and figures cannot in itself create in the government as a whole a clearcut understanding of the exact relationship between this danger and such other large facts as the hostility of the Soviet Power. It is just because this relationship is so delicate and difficult, just because both of these facts are so large and real, that we believe they must be dealt with together by the highest officers of the government. And this means, we believe, that neither diplomats nor military officers should be expected to undertake the task of planning and acting independently on these matters. Only a central control,

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

we believe, can maintain the flexibility and breadth of view which are essential to the management of a situation in which there is no single clear-cut goal, and no fixed and immutable course.

We shall have occasion in later sections to suggest some of the courses which in our view might commend themselves to a government ^{which was so organized} ~~aware of the atomic power and~~ ~~that it could manage all~~ ~~organized in such a way that it managed~~ matters affecting atomic energy with an eye to their full meaning. It will be apparent that nearly all of these suggestions require such a government if they are to have a chance of success. And indeed we feel that it is much more important for the government to unify its control of ^{these matters} ~~the atom~~ than it is for any one of our specific suggestions to find favor. We think that such a reordering of authority and responsibility is second in importance only to the need for public and official understanding of the realities of the situation, and we are persuaded that these two changes together would lay a foundation for both thought and action such that before long such thinking as ours would seem primitive and obsolete. If we nevertheless proceed to express these primitive thoughts, it is only because

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

19

they may be of some use in helping others to do better.

C. Some Relatively Clear-Cut Possibilities.

It is important for us all to understand our peril; it is only less important that our government should be organized so that its decisions take full account of this same peril. But these recommendations do not of themselves tell what to do about it. Sooner or later we must come to grips with the fundamental problem of framing a course of policy which will take full account of the Soviet threat and still allow the United States to move effectively toward some arrangement that removes the danger of atomic stockpiles. If this is a wholly insoluble problem, all that has been urged in earlier parts of this paper becomes relatively unimportant.

But before we turn to this central problem, it is appropriate to consider briefly three special problems which seem to us to yield ^{reasonably definite} ~~fairly clear-cut~~ solutions when considered in the light of the atomic ^{danger} ~~peril~~. These ^{"solutions"} ~~may~~ have a certain value in themselves, and in any event the consideration of the problems will suggest something of our sense of the larger question. These three problems

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

20

Continental
are those of Air Defense, the United Nations Disarmament Commission, and Allied Atomic relations.

Continental
Air Defense.

No problem has forced itself upon us more insistently and regularly, in the course of our work, than that of *the of the continental United States.* air defense. Nominally this question would seem to fall outside the range of our assignment, but in fact it is impossible to consider the problem of arms regulation without giving careful attention to the whole subject of defense against weapons of mass destruction. As we have pointed out before (at *Part* II E) arms regulation and air defense are complementary methods of achieving the goal of safety against the danger of a surprise knock-out blow. They are thus interlocked in a variety of ways, and no policy can be consistent and effective unless it applies to both subjects the same fundamental attitude. It is not too much to say, in our view, that unless air defense is taken seriously, arms regulation must seem a foolish goal, while if real attention is given to defensive measures, the whole approach to arms regulation may become more manageable. Let us try to explain these conclusions.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

~~T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T~~

21

In at least four ways, an intensified effort of air defense can serve to improve the position of the United States Government with respect to the threat of atomic destruction. First and most obviously, every improvement in our defenses delays the time at which the Soviet Union will be able to strike a knock-out blow-- or to put the matter another way, it reduces the amount of damage which the Russians can do at any one time. Any such improvement also makes it more difficult and expensive to achieve any given result, ^{for} and while bombs are ^{relatively} cheap, bombers are not.

Second, the very act of increasing our attention to air defense is bound to help in developing a healthy sense of the dangers of the atom. Evidently the sense of danger and the level of effort on air defense are interlocking; each increase in one will help to increase the other. Equally clearly there is a point at which both could become excessive--but we think it plain beyond argument that this point is not yet in sight.

Third, both as it improves our defensive capacity and as it sharpens our awareness of danger, an air defense

~~T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T~~

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

32

effort will help the United States government take a posture in which it can prepare for serious negotiations on the regulation of atomic weapons. In preparing for such negotiations it is important both to raise the ceiling of our danger and to be clearly aware that the ceiling is there; both these purposes are served by an intensified effort to protect ourselves.

Finally, an improved air defense is highly desirable from the point of view of its effect on the Soviet mind. It cannot be read as an aggressive move, and it should constitute real evidence of the fact that we believe atomic weapons to be dangerous for all concerned. It will also serve, in the measure of its apparent effectiveness, to dissuade Soviet readers from attempting any catastrophic attack.

In summary, then, we think it overwhelmingly plain that there is every reason to proceed with greatly intensified efforts of air defense. The only conceivable objection to such efforts would be a demonstration that they cannot have any significant success, and we believe that the balance of the evidence runs all the other way. It is true, of course, that it will hardly be possible to

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

23

achieve 100% safety, and it is unlikely that the best efforts can bring us very close to that figure. But it is important always to remember that what we are trying to defend ourselves against is a knock-out blow; in such a defense every little bit helps, and a relatively modest improvement may be decisive. We have tried to inform ourselves of the balance of scientific and technical opinion in the field of air defense, and we are persuaded that at costs which are most moderate in comparison with the total defense budget highly important progress can be made in providing an early warning system, in improving our set of weapons for knocking down bomb-carriers, in our anti-submarine defense, and in our planning for rapid recuperation after attack. This is not the place for a detailed exposition of these considerations; it is enough to assert that in ^{the} ~~this~~ whole vast ^{of atomic policy} field, there is no clearer case of a set of opportunities waiting to be grasped.

In closing this section we should perhaps note one set of objections to an intensified air defense effort which seems to us to fall wide of the mark. It is sometimes argued that there is grave danger in giving greater

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

24

attention to air defense, since this would require a lessening of our attention to the development of our strategic air capability. This argument seems to us to be based on the unreal notion that we must have one or the other and cannot have both. It is true that at certain marginal points the two kinds of program are competitive; this is always true in military procurement. But with the expansion of our defense mobilization it is becoming increasingly nonsensical to keep our air defense on a starvation diet. In our view the ^{American} strategic air capability itself ^{in some measure upon} depends on the maintenance of a high level of defensive strength, for we believe that if the time comes when the Soviet Union can strike a retaliatory blow involving many millions of casualties, it ^{may} ~~will~~ not be easy for any American President to order the Strategic Air Command off the ground ^{in response to Soviet aggression in any non-atomic form.}

Disarmament Discussions in the United Nations.

In our examination of the problem of negotiation with the Soviet Union in Part III, we made it clear that we do not think the United Nations Disarmament Commission is a good place for serious negotiation. We suggested also that an effort which quite evidently cannot have serious

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

25

results must make it appear, in the long run, that the United States does not take the problem of arms regulation seriously, at least in terms of current policy. Accordingly we think that American policy should aim at a gradual cessation of discussion in the Disarmament Commission.

In making this recommendation we do not wish to be understood as asserting that it was a mistake to do what was done. That is emphatically not our view. From the initial proposals of the United States government in 1946 right through to the present day, there has been a constant and genuine effort to show the good will of the American position. But each major effort has come sharply to a halt against the wall of Soviet intransigence. And just as it was wise in 1948 to call a halt to detailed discussion of the problem of atomic energy because it had become an empty routine, so we think it is now time to recognize that the ^{whole} open approach to arms regulation through commissions of the United Nations is doomed to failure.

Naturally it is not desirable that the United States should announce its new view all of a sudden and without preparation. A shift of this sort should be

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

26

foreshadowed by a period in which attention is directed to the fact that there has so far been no helpful response from the Soviet Union on any point. Depending on the readiness of the United States to proceed toward the sort of negotiations we have urged as desirable, it might also be well to indicate the view that one reason for ~~stalling~~ ^{minimizing} ~~up-on~~ discussions in the United Nations is that it may be possible to make better progress elsewhere. In any case, we are not suggesting anything abrupt or unprepared.

Our general belief that discussion in the United Nations should gradually be brought to an end is matched by our feeling that there is nothing to be gained by a public revision of any of the proposals which the United States has supported during the last six years. In particular, we think it would not be useful to attempt a new and modernized version of the United Nations Plan for the control of atomic energy. As we have already pointed out, our feeling is that this plan bears the marks of its year of birth, and we are persuaded that what seemed right in 1946 is no longer wholly relevant in 1952; the world we now have is in many respects different from that of 1946, and these differences are important. But the

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

27

fundamental difficulty here is not in the fact that the plan is six years old; it is rather in the fact that full-fledged plans presented publicly by one side are no longer the best method of reaching a workable arrangement. A modified version of the United Nations Plan might be relatively easy to prepare, but it would not have any real meaning, and as it aged, it would raise more doubts than it resolved. The United Nations Plan has the great merit that it is a monument to real hopes and good intentions; we do not see that it is a good idea to peck at it in the interests of present-day psychological warfare.

Atomic Relationships with our Allies.

We think it is time for the whole problem of the use of atomic weapons to be shared in considerable measure with the nations with which we are allied. The military importance of such trust is almost self-evident and has recently been emphasized by General Bradley. We think there is also great political value to be gained from spreading the responsibility for judgment on these matters.

No small part of the uncertainty which surrounds

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

28

the field of atomic weapons derives from the widespread feeling that the United States is clutching the atom to its bosom and may at any moment get angry and hurl it in the general direction of the Kremlin. This feeling, in our view, is quite unjustified, and in fact the United States government has constantly given important weight to the fears and feelings of its allies. But the appearance of aloofness has been maintained, and this appearance seems to us to do no good and much harm. We think the balance of feeling of the free world would be improved if it were generally understood that the United States considers the use of atomic bombs to be a legitimate area of allied discussion. We also think that if the major allies of the United States can be given a sense of shared responsibility, their understanding of the weapon and its dangers may be improved. In general, we believe it is desirable for the West to have a common front on this matter; it is unsound that there should be wide differences of opinion as to the level of the atomic danger and the point at which it would be desirable to use atomic weapons. It may be very difficult to get general

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

29

agreement on these matters, but clearly some candor in discussion and some common responsibility in planning are essential first steps.

In urging a higher level of inter-allied communication on the problems of the atomic arms race, we are certainly not suggesting that the United States Government should tie its own hands and surrender the right to decide for itself, in an emergency, whether and how it will use its atomic weapons. No allied connection need have this effect. What we are urging is rather that all the allied states stand to gain if they can reach a common appreciation of the character of the problem. If this is to be done, the first condition is that they be reasonably frank with each other.

We think that an increased harmony in allied thinking is particularly important in shaping policy toward the opening of serious negotiations. Whether or not the actual negotiations should be limited to the U.S. and the USSR, it will be vital that the United States be in basic agreement with her major allies; in particular the nations of Western Europe will almost certainly fear the

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

20-A

loss of the bomb as much as some of them now seem to fear its existence, and it will be of high importance to reach a reasonable understanding with them as to the conditions and guarantees which might make it wise to accept a limitation of atomic weapons. Such an understanding can hardly be possible unless there has first been a genuine

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

~~T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T~~

30

exchange of information and opinion. What is true for the opening of negotiations is true also, we think, in the still large field of *the collective action of the* ~~our posture vis-a-vis the Soviet~~ *free world.* Union. At present the atom is a source of some mistrust and fear among the free nations; if they can come to a common understanding of its meaning, it can become a source of strength. Both the dangers that exist in the arms race and the increasing importance of atomic weapons in the defense of Europe are major arguments for strenuous efforts to get such understanding.

~~T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T~~

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

31

D. The Meaning of Arms Regulation for American Foreign Policy

We come at last to the hardest problem of all. Is it really possible for the United States to shape her policy in such a way that it becomes possible to conceive of a settlement with the Soviet Union in which weapons of long-range mass destruction are brought effectively under control? Are there any possible conditions, short of a general Soviet disarmament, which would permit the United States to abandon the weapon which has been her chief reliance in the years since 1945?

We have asked ourselves these questions over and over, trying to get some firm sense of the very large difficulties which they contain--and we are persuaded that no sensible man can pretend to give them a clearcut and definite answer. We think it possible that the very best efforts of the United States might meet Soviet responses of a sort which would make it quite impossible to work out an arms agreement on which the American people could or would rely; we also think it possible that serious negotiations might lead to a form of agreement more simple and satisfactory than any we have felt it realistic to consider. Between these two

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

33

entire possibilities lie many others, and our own balance of feeling is that somewhere in this middle range the reality may be found. But we cannot know for sure--and this very uncertainty is what in our view deserves emphasis. We cannot prove that a satisfactory settlement is possible; we cannot even say with any assurance what it should contain. But it is also impossible to conclude that nothing can be done. In the face of these great uncertainties, our remarks about the general pattern of international politics in which arms regulation would be acceptable must be still less definite than our sketch of the character of the arms regulation itself, in Part II.

One of our fundamental uncertainties is as to whether or not the regulation of armaments would now require a general and large-scale adjustment of other political differences. We have noted in Part I our feeling that one of the causes of failure in earlier efforts at arms limitation has been a faulty or incomplete connection between the effort to control armaments and the other major problems of international affairs. On the face of it this experience seems to argue against any notion that it might be possible to reach a

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

33

settlement with the Soviet Union in which the central and dominating element was an agreed modification of the contest in weapons of mass destruction. At the very least, we suppose, the American government is correct in its assertion that it can hardly be possible to settle the problem of armaments while the problem of Korea remains unsettled.

On the other hand we have also noted that long-range weapons of mass destruction--and for the present this means centrally atomic and thermonuclear bombs--now have a destructive force such that in and of themselves they are becoming political facts of ever-increasing importance, in a fashion for which there is no precedent in the armaments of earlier periods.* The peculiar menace of the growing stockpiles is such that a very high political value must be attached to any arrangement which would eliminate them; we are not

* It is perhaps arguable that the German naval effort before 1914 fell in the category of a form of armament so dangerous (to Great Britain) as to be a major political fact. But it is also arguable that it would have been wise and useful to regulate this contest, in and of itself.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

34

dealing here with the usual sort of arms race, expensive and competitive, but always political at its center. We have rather a contest which sets its own terms and sets them well beyond anything we have known before. We find it hard to discard entirely the feeling that it may be proper to think of this contest as having such importance that it would make sense to seek a settlement in which indeed the arms race and not other issues would be central.

The sharpest problem for American policy, of course, arises from the fact that atomic weapons now bear a very heavy load in the general structure of our foreign policy. One of their functions, obviously, is to deter the Soviet Union from making use of its own atomic bombs, and this function would be satisfactorily accounted for if indeed a genuine agreement on atomic weapons could be reached. But as we have said in Part II, we think it plain that any scheme that is to give safety from a surprise knock-out blow must include some modifications in the arms race beyond the immediate field of atomic energy; this extension seems also to be strongly desirable if we are not to face a collapse of our foreign policy when and if atomic weapons are brought under control. Is it not necessary, for example, that if Western

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

35

Europe is to be defended without atomic weapons, the size of the Soviet military machine should be decreased? It may be that a reduction of Soviet armed forces is not the most practicable method of meeting this difficulty--many students believe that in the end the proper arrangement must be a withdrawal of Soviet power back to the borders of the Soviet Union itself. If this should be the case, however, it would be hard to claim that the political adjustments involved in controlling the atom were minor. In any event, there appears to be something unreal about the notion that the atomic bomb might be brought under control without some accompanying settlement that would give some security to Europe; if it be true that in the end it is the American industrial plant which limits Soviet expansionism, it is conceivable that a simple American guarantee might do the job, if only it were sufficiently widely believed--and if also its effectiveness as a deterrent were universally accepted. But the experience of the last few years does not suggest that a simple guarantee can at present carry this much of the load.

Yet perhaps the present feebleness of a simple guarantee is not a proper yardstick of its possible future

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

36

meaning. In the context of an agreement controlling atomic energy, an American guarantee might even take on a new strength. For it is important to observe that atomic energy does not disappear from the calculus of power when existing stocks are destroyed and existing plants brought under control. The technical knowledge will continue to exist, and it can hardly be doubted that in any long war atomic bombs would be made and used. Now in such a fresh start from scratch the United States is likely to have a considerable advantage, and in this sense an American guarantee would continue to be a guarantee backed by atomic weapons, while the protective strength of the atom would not be blurred, as it now is, by the fear that the stockpiles themselves are an explosive menace. We have not been able to satisfy ourselves of the exact meaning of atomic bombs when they exist only as a potential source of power, but we think it at least possible that the line of thinking here sketched out may be correct.

The uncertainties and complexities of this inquiry are obvious already--but our own discussions have included one more. Granting that in the present structure of our foreign policy many different responsibilities rest on atomic weapons, does it necessarily follow that as we try to control

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

37

And then we must for that reason seek other forms of settlement which will make it possible to live without atomic weapons? It has seemed to us that perhaps this sort of thinking overlooks the possibility that we should begin to limit our reliance on atomic weapons whether or not we hope to bring them under some form of control. Is it not possible that as the Soviet stockpile grows, our own willingness to use atomic weapons may decrease? For the present it seems wise to make full use of atomic weapons in planning the defense of Europe. But will it seem so wise to Europeans, if they come to feel that Soviet atomic weapons hang heavy over the great cities of Western Europe? May they not then become unwilling, under any circumstances, to contemplate the use of the atomic bomb? Similar questions may be asked in terms of the United States herself. It seems to us that these questions, while they cannot have definite answers, do suggest that it may become a matter of urgency to decrease our dependence on the atomic bomb, even in the absence of any realistic hope of an international agreement to control it. And of course, to the degree that this dependence is decreased, it will become possible to diminish the number of special agreements that must accompany any limitation of atomic armaments.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

38

We have here a final example of the fundamental inseparability of the different aspects of policy in the face of the atomic danger. If it be true that this danger is great and increasing, it becomes desirable to try to shape our policy so that we are not forced to rely on atomic weapons any more than is absolutely necessary. Any success that we have in this effort will at once make it easier for us to accept international control of atomic energy, and less difficult for us to survive if such international control should continue to be unattainable. As we decrease the extent of our reliance on atomic weapons for other purposes, their value as a protection against any Soviet use of such weapons will increase, and indeed we think it probable that the world would be a distinctly less dangerous place if we could ever reach a point at which it could be American policy not to use atomic weapons first.

But to state the matter in this sharp form is to recall its difficulty. It is not simply by accident that our reliance on atomic weapons is now so heavy; it is rather the result of a series of hard choices, and effective substitutes for atomic weapons cannot be obtained simply by wishing for them. Already, for example, it is a question whether the

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

39

rearmament of Europe is not making demands too heavy for the social structure of the Western European nations; there is no simple way of providing a substitute for the kind of reinforcement that atomic weapons can at present give. And while it may be clear that the true limit of American military capacity has not yet been reached, it seems far from clear that the American government could muster long-term public support for the sort of arms effort that might be necessary if atomic bombs were to be progressively detached from the ^mbrain tasks of strategy--even if we suppose that such a decision to detach the atomic weapon could itself attract public support, which is a large assumption.

And so each additional set of considerations, here at the center of the problem, reveals the folly of attempting definite and clearcut answers. For ourselves, we can only say that we think these uncertainties unavoidable. These are topics so embedded in time and change that any certainty would be pretense. Some of the critical elements in any judgment depend, as we have seen in Part III, on the progress or lack of progress of the serious discussions with the Soviet Union which we believe to be a proper part of future policy. Others depend on the changing shape and content of American

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

40

policy itself, and while we have ventured a number of reasonably specific recommendations in this field, we do not feel competent to assess with any certainty the quantitative impact of such possible changes. Nor do the Soviet and American uncertainties exhaust the catalogue; indeed there is much ground for supposing that the really uncertain and indefinite factors are in the lands between.

So the pattern of our thinking is one in which we feel a certain clarity about the direction policy should take, and some certainty about the nature of the correct first steps, while we still disclaim any ability to see clearly the nature of the final goal. We cannot say with finality that the United States will indeed find itself able at some future time to support a policy of arms regulation under political conditions that are either unimportant or reasonably acceptable from the standpoint of the Soviet Union; we cannot say that this is impossible, either. What we can and do say is that it ~~is~~ seems desirable, and even urgent, for the United States to try to move in the general direction of preparation for a policy in which arms regulation can be a real objective. And it is on this ~~e~~ incomplete but still compelling ground that we have reached the more definite

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

41

and pressing conclusions which have been set forth earlier. All of them are directly connected with the larger and less definite purpose of shaping a general policy to meet the danger of sudden catastrophe.

And although our sense of the final objective may be vague and uncertain, our more limited and concrete recommendations will not seem light and trivial to men who have had the burden of responsibility in recent years. On the contrary, our suggestions must seem difficult and dangerous, and we must conclude with a short explanation of our understanding of this fact.

B. The Difficulties in Accepting Our Recommendations

The sum of our conclusions, for American policy, is not small. We have urged (1) a new candor about the atomic danger; (2) a new and closer control of all major problems of armaments by the highest officers of the Government; (3) a sharp increase in efforts to defend the United States; (4) a gradual disengagement from the disarmament negotiations in the United Nations; (5) ~~an effort~~ to seek a new level of understanding and common purpose with our major allies. These five specific recommendations grew from and lead back to our central feeling that a policy based on

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T O P S E C R E T

42

awareness of the danger in the arms race will give some chance of limiting that danger, perhaps by arms regulation and perhaps by other means.

Not one of our five specific recommendations is new. All have been heard, and many of them heard repeatedly, in recent years. All of them, moreover, are touchy, in the sense that they are energetically opposed by one of more powerful and important groups. And although we think our conclusions soundly based, we understand that these are questions on which honorable men can honestly differ. So we do not wish to suggest that we are blind to the difficulties which would face an Administration that wished to adopt a program somewhat like the one we have put forward.

It is not our function to suggest the detailed means by which an Administration might begin to manage these matters. Clearly new departures of the sort we have urged would have to rest on a wide base of inquiry, especially in the case of such technical matters as Continental Defense (though much

~~T O P S E C R E T~~T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

43

preliminary work has been done in this area). Equally clearly they would have to be directed and even propelled by the simple and uniquely important force of top-level leadership. In some cases--like that of the organization of responsibility and authority--the problem is essentially internal to the Executive Branch. In others--perhaps most plainly in that of relations with our Allies--there will be a need for understanding with the Congress and even for legislation amending the Atomic Energy Act of 1946. And we think it important to recognize that nothing is gained by proposals--however attractive in theory--which arouse such opposition that the net effect is to increase the rigidity of the status quo and undermine the authority and leadership of the Government. We cannot ourselves determine whether and how far our own recommendations can in fact come to command a reasonable measure of responsible support in the Executive Branch and in the Congress--and it is not for us to attempt such an estimate. But it is appropriate to note that unless they can in fact come to have some backing of this kind, it can hardly be helpful to press them very far.

T O P S E C R E T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

44

V. Conclusion and Summary.

We are now at the end of all our argument. Atomic stockpiles are dangerous; it is possible to think of relatively robust and realistic ways of removing this danger; there is no compelling objection to serious negotiations with the Russians, and there seems likely to be some real advantage in conducting such discussions. We are unable to say how far such discussions would necessarily involve matters other than the control of armaments, and we believe that it would be a mistake to attempt to reach definite conclusions on this point.

Our central conviction is that the whole of our policy, foreign and domestic, should give greatly increased weight to the danger in the growing supplies of weapons of mass destruction. We believe that this danger is on the same level of importance as our devotion to American freedom and our opposition to Soviet expansionism. And in particular, as ways of recognizing the reality of the danger, we strongly urge the American Government:

(1) that it adopt a tone of candor to the American people and to its own officials about the character of the atomic arms race.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-C-P S-E-C-R-E-T

45

(2) that it gather into the hands of its highest officials the authority and responsibility for thought and action in the field of atomic weapons,

(3) that it radically increase its attention to the task of Continental Defense,

(4) that it disengage itself from the unreal discussions of the United Nations Disarmament Commission,

(5) that it seek a wholly new level of understanding and common purpose on problems of atomic energy with its major allies.

No man can foretell whether in fact the people and government of the United States are sufficiently wise and steadfast to safeguard their freedom, frustrate Soviet hostility, and avoid an atomic holocaust. In this undertaking much is required, including many kinds of action and awareness which it has not fallen to us to emphasize. What we have tried to do is to suggest the realities of the problem of armaments, as they appear to us, and to draw from these realities the outlines of a desirable course of action. Let us emphasize once again our awareness of the fact that our thinking is incomplete and our recommendations perhaps too confident for the underpinning

T-C-P S-E-C-R-E-T

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

46

we have been able to give them. But let us also emphasize that the dangers from which our thinking proceeds are not imaginary. While specific solutions may turn out to be impossible or undesirable, the danger will persist and so will the need to meet it. So we say again what we have said before, that a sober and determined awareness of our danger is the beginning of wisdom. We feel sure that from that beginning others of our countrymen can improve on all that we have said.

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T